

MIDLANDS

THE UK'S BIGGEST REGIONAL GAY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

ZONE

THE ESSENTIAL
NIGHTLIFE +
CLUBBING
GUIDE

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INSIDE

BIRMINGHAM PRIDE 2015

PRIDE SET TO GO AHEAD
DESPITE CITY COUNCIL CUTS

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TO THE MIDLANDS

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The Editor's Note

Ryan Humphreys @ryanhumphreys

Welcome to the first edition of Midlands Zone in the brand spanking new year that is 2015!

So how did 2014 end for you? Submerged in a veritable snowdrift of turkey sandwiches and mince pies? If so, you'll no doubt be looking ahead to the next few months as the perfect time to say farewell to those fast-emerging love handles and become a better all-round version of yourself. After all, what are new year's resolutions for if not to encourage a period of self-improvement?

Get lean in 2015



Speaking of which, we've this month included a feature about Birmingham LGBT's Sports England-funded three-year fitness and sports project. If, as I've mentioned above, getting a handle on those love handles is your primary target for 2015, then this recently launched initiative could be just the kick-start you're looking for. The project includes a variety of fitness classes based at Birmingham LGBT's city centre premises, monthly taster sessions with existing LGBT sports clubs across the city and special Pride In Sport days. The initiative is being supported by £142,000 of National Lottery funding.

Interested in getting involved and getting fit? If so, check out our feature, which includes details about how to access further information.

The cruelest cuts

With a general election looming, political parties of all persuasions are eager to present voters with good news. So how tricky must our economic situation be that both Labour and the Tories are instead having to talk about making cuts, cuts and more cuts?

Two particular cuts earmarked for 2015 have caught my attention in recent weeks. The first, of course, is Birmingham City Council's axing of its grant to Birmingham Pride, meaning the festival will this year have to pay for its own road closures. The cut is one of a series of measures announced by the council as it attempts to balance its books in the wake of the



condemnatory Kerslake Review, which labelled the Birmingham authority dysfunctional.

The second cut worthy of mention is the Government's proposed 50% reduction in spending on its national HIV prevention programme in England. This is a move which understandably has had HIV charities and sexual health organisations up in arms. Commenting on the news, Dr Rosemary Gillespie, Chief Executive at Terrence Higgins Trust, said: "This is not the right time for the Government to pare back spending on HIV prevention. In recent years, we've made good progress in driving down rates of undiagnosed and late-diagnosed HIV. However, tens of thousands of people with HIV across England are still undiagnosed and at increased risk of passing the virus on unwittingly. We've not yet reached the tipping point in our fight against the epidemic, and halving government spending on HIV prevention now would be a regressive step that risks undermining the headway that we've made."

Times, as they say, are hard.

A more equal future?



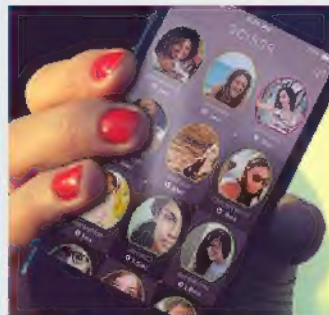
Last year will go down as a momentous one in the LGBT battle for equality here in the UK, with gay marriage finally becoming legal. As we look ahead to 2015, we must hope that we can make further progress towards a fair and equal society. Let's hope, too, that the rights of LGBTs are shown a greater respect across the world, particularly in those countries that continue to punish homosexuality, in many cases either with death or imprisonment.

A Happy New Year to you all.

Ryan x

What's Hot!

A hot new lesbian app



A mindblowing new dating app for lesbians called Scissr, launching this month, is classier than male counterpart Grindr. Designed by lesbians, it's tailor-made for all women - so give it a go.

Martina Navratilova gets married at 58



After proposing at the US Open to her girlfriend of nine years, Julia Larnigova, tennis legend Martina Navratilova has finally tied the knot at the age of 58. Congratulations to both Martina and Julia - everyone at Midlands Zone wishes you happiness!

What's Not!

Russian raids...



A homophobic lawmaker in Russia recently raided a St Petersburg gay club's fetish party, accompanied by riot police and a film crew. Vitaly Milonov authored the 'gay propaganda' law that's become so notorious. A large number of people were arrested.

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Splash Spa & Leisure Clinic:

Date: Every Thursday

Time: 3pm - 6pm

Place: Splash Spa & Leisure, 61 Bedford Street South, Leicester, LE1 3JR



Ricki Wellman

Co-Owner
Gorgeous, Wolverhampton

Born: Portsmouth

Star sign: Gemini

Age: 29

Each month we take a look at someone from the Midlands LGBT community. This month, our focus turns on Ricki Wellman, co-owner of Wolverhampton's hugely popular Gorgeous bar & club.

About Ricki

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Southsea.

Single or attached?

Attached. I've been with my partner, Shaun, for nearly 12 years.

What makes you happy?

Seeing other people happy. Oh, and a good episode of Extreme Makeover, Home Edition!

What makes you sad?

Cruelty to animals, bullying and homophobia. There's no place for such things in the world.

What makes you angry?

People who don't clean up after themselves - and bad drivers!

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

I'd like to be much more confident, not just after a few double Jack Daniels!

What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?

Doing cartwheels in a dress in Gran Canaria, forgetting I had no pants on! (Yes, it was after a few double Jack Daniels!)

Now that same-sex marriage has been legalised, would you consider getting married?

Depends who to! I'm in a Civil Partnership with Shaun and very happy.

Coming Out

When did you first know you were gay?

I suppose I've always known, but you always try to 'fit in'!

When did you come out?

In 2002, I was working at Butlins in Bognor and - well...

What was school like for you as a gay teenager?

I had girlfriends at school, but there were some sexy lads there!

Who was the first person you told, and what was their reaction?

I told my twin brother, who then decided to tell my mom. I got revenge, however, as he came out too and I returned the favour!

What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?

As Lady Gaga says, 'You were born this way!' Don't let anyone tell you any different.

Have you ever had any experiences with the opposite sex?

Yes. The therapy worked, though!

Your Career

When you were younger, what did you want to be?

I've always wanted to be an interior designer. Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen would have nothing on me! Mind you, being from Portsmouth, the Navy was always an option. How would I

have coped?!

What was your first job after leaving school?

I worked for my uncle's phone shop - Talking Technologies in Havant - then moved on to Butlins.

You co-own Gorgeous bar & club in Wolverhampton. Was owning a nightclub something you'd always wanted to do?

After working at Butlins and helping a friend DJ at Martha's in Portsmouth, I fell in love with the entertainment industry. I'm really proud of Gorgeous.

What challenges do you face running Gorgeous?

Working with Dale Murphy! I do all the design work for posters, flyers and the website. It's constantly challenging, having to come up with fresh ideas. We have a great team, though, and work together closely, which helps us rise to any challenge.

What are the highlights of working in the nightclub industry?

Meeting so many different people and seeing them enjoy a great night out. Oh, and the abundance of Jack Daniels, of course!

What have been some of Gorgeous's biggest highlights?

My favourite is winning the Zone Readers' Award for Best Overall Gay Venue in The Midlands. We've also had some amazing guests. Patsy Palmer from EastEnders was sooo funny - a real entertainer!

What do you think sets

Gorgeous apart from the rest?

I think it's our mix of customers. Sexuality is irrelevant. People come to Gorgeous for a good time. I'm proud that Gorgeous broke down the barriers in Wolverhampton.

There are some big changes coming to Gorgeous in 2015. Would you care to tell us about them?

After lots of consideration and deliberation, we've decided the time is right to move to a bigger venue. On 26 September 2015, Gorgeous will become a 700-capacity nightclub - almost four times bigger than it is now! Luckily, the new site is right opposite the old! The move will give us the opportunity to attract bigger-name acts and really put Wolverhampton back on the map!

Where do you want to see Gorgeous in five years time?

Thriving and successful, obviously - and maybe just one of a small chain!

You're also involved in a couple of other projects, like the Bond Street Tavern and a couple of radio stations. Tell us a bit more about them...

The Bond Street Tavern just happened! It was a surprise! We were browsing through available pubs one afternoon and there it was. After speaking to the landlord, we agreed to take it on. It gave us a chance to create a venue nothing like Gorgeous; much quieter and relaxing, with good food and real ales. The radio stations (Gorgeous Radio and Gorgeous Xtra) were created to give local people the chance to get on air. They were operated initially as community stations, but in 2015 will become more closely aligned with the club.

Where do you want to see yourself in five years time?

I'd like to look back and think that all the hard work was worth it. A nice house, nice car, and the ability to support my family would be great.

Gay Scene

How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene and what's your earliest memory?

I moved to the Midlands in 2005 when me and Shaun took over the running of Route Two. I think we gave it its 'last hurrah' before it declined and closed. My earliest memory was Pride 2005 when I ended up dressed as a butterfly -

and on the front page of the Birmingham Mail!

Who's your favourite cabaret act on the gay scene?

I have two favourites. Cassidy Connors (from my home city) and the amazing Pam Catz. I did a photoshoot with Pam and was in stitches! Sorry, Pam, you will get them soon!

Who's your favourite person on the gay scene?

I have to say Dale Murphy, manager of Gorgeous. He works so hard to manage our business (he told me to say this!).

What do you most enjoy about the gay scene?

I love the Pride festivals, and worked really hard on the design of Wolverhampton & Black Country Pride.

What have you noticed about the way the gay scene has changed over the years?

There are more straight people using gay venues, which I think is a good thing. Venues have to work much harder these days to get customers, which has obviously meant more competitiveness.

How would you change the Midlands' gay scene?

I think it will continue to evolve naturally. Will there even be a 'gay' scene in 20 years' time?

Time Out

Where do you like to go on a night out?

A good night out in Birmingham is always welcome. The Loft Lounge, Missing, Sidewalk, Eden, The Village and The Gale. If I'm out in Portsmouth, it has to be Hampshire Boulevard.

What do you do to relax?

Enjoy a crafty half hour in the hot tub or sit in front of the fire with Pip the dog!

What do you enjoy on telly?

Law & Order, Law & Order SVU, Law & Order Criminal Intent, CSI, NCIS. Are you getting the picture?! I can't wait for the next series of Tyrant either! Oh, and How To Get Away With Murder! Oh, and Grand Designs!

What was the last album or track you bought?

Union J and Ella Henderson.



Which one website do you spend the most time on?

If I not working on www.gorgeouslive.co.uk, it's Facebook.

Which type of holiday do you prefer?

Either quiet and relaxing or, at the other extreme, loud and wild!

Quickfire

Who's your favourite actor?

Julia Roberts and Angelina Jolie.

What's your favourite book?

I rarely read!

Half-empty or half-full?

Half empty.

What's your favourite food?

Thai green curry.

And how about your favourite drink?

Do I really need to answer this?! Double Jack Daniels and Coke!

Madonna or Lady Gaga?

MaGaga.

Gaydar or Grindr?

Grindr - for advertising purposes only!

If you could take a selfie with one person, alive or dead, who would it be?

Marilyn Monroe.

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PRIDE 2015 Birmingham Pride festival to go ahead despite devastating City Council funding cuts



Birmingham Pride's Carnival Parade is at risk of being axed from the event...

Birmingham Pride organisers have given the Midlands' gay community a massive new year boost by confirming that the 2015 festival will go ahead despite Birmingham City Council's recent decision to axe its grant to the event.

Although the loss of the grant means Pride must now pay for costs imposed by the council like road closures, organisers have moved fast to make it clear that the main commercial aspects of the festival are in no way under threat - and the event is widely expected to build on the huge successes of the last two years.

Organisers have, however, acknowledged that the loss of the £20,000 of in kind support offered by the council body in previous years will leave a black hole financially for both the carnival parade and community area.

Birmingham Pride's Festival Director, Lawrence Barton, commented "Naturally we're very disappointed at losing this important contribution from Birmingham City Council, primarily because it could directly affect those elements of the festival that

are free. However, we're pleased to confirm to everyone that next year's event will definitely proceed as planned, and we're confident that we will be able to build on the successes of the most recent years.

He added: "Although the cuts are regrettable, we will work hard with our partners and sponsors to ensure, at the very least, that the community village green aspect will continue in some form, and we are already in discussions with key community groups and leaders to see how best to facilitate this moving forward. The carnival parade, however, might be a much bigger hurdle for the festival to overcome and secure its future, but we will nonetheless do our utmost to look at all the options available to us."

The cut is one of a series of measures announced by the council as it attempts to balance its books in the wake of the condemnatory Kerslake Review, which labelled the Birmingham authority dysfunctional. The city's St Patrick's Day Parade and Eid Mela are other events to be hit by the cuts.

In an exclusive statement to Midlands Zone, Birmingham Pride organisers have revealed that of the £20,000 of 'in kind' support which has been cut from the council's budget, the majority of the costs as-

sociated with the funding relates to costs like road closures, parking bay suspensions, traffic management and health and safety aspects totalling around £17,500.

In 2016, the work undertaken by the city council events team, which has a value of approximately £5,000, will also be withdrawn.

The cuts are part of a wide process of consultation across the city council. The authority is trying to balance the city's accounts in an attempt to reduce the local deficit and expenditure across all of local government. The process will also result in the loss of hundreds of city council jobs.

Birmingham Pride will take place as usual over the May Bank Holiday Weekend (Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May). Preparations for the festival are already well under way. All of the paid-for aspects of the event, including the main stage, cabaret marquee, dance arena and funfair, will definitely feature organisers have claimed.



The main stage will go ahead!

What's On MAGAZINE GROUP

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SCENE Popular Wolverhampton gay bar & club to move to new premises later in the year

The new Gorgeous sits on School Street



The owners of Gorgeous Bar & Club, the award-winning gay venue in Wolverhampton, have announced that it will be moving to new premises later this year.

The new Gorgeous will boast a capacity of 700, an executive suite, VIP booths and a state-of-the-art sound and light system. Commenting on the move, Company General Manager Shaun Keasey said: "Gorgeous is an established and popular part of Wolverhampton's nighttime economy, with an amazing mix of customers. We're immensely proud of how far it's come in the five years since we opened. We will miss the current Gorgeous, but the time has come to move to the next level. "The new site is in School Street, directly opposite the existing Gorgeous - which is great, as it means people are already familiar with

our new location! The new venue and its capacity will allow us to play host to big-name DJs and acts. We can't wait!"

Venue manager Dale Murphy will be sad to see the current venue close, but assures everyone it will not be the end: "The 'old' Gorgeous will be refurbished and renamed 'Event'. It will be a pre-bar for the new site but will also be available for hire - something lacking in Wolverhampton City Centre at the moment."

For more information, visit www.gorgeous-club.co.uk or facebook.com/gorgeousbar

NATIONAL NEWS

HEALTH AIDS charity slams Government's 50% cut to national HIV prevention funding for England

National AIDS Trust (NAT) has slammed the Government's 50% cut to national HIV prevention funding for England.

Commenting on the cuts, Deborah Gold, Chief Executive of NAT, said: "This decision is simply staggering. HIV transmission shows no signs of decline, with the highest number of diagnoses among gay and bisexual men ever last year. Public knowledge of HIV is far too low, and myths about HIV are on the increase. We are at serious risk of going backwards on HIV if national-level investment is not made in HIV prevention. We urge the Government to think again."

EQUALITY Stonewall Star Performers to provide workplace equality assistance

Gay charity Stonewall has launched a new programme to bring together top-performing organisations who have consistently demonstrated exemplary practice to support lesbian, gay and bisexual staff.

The new Stonewall Star Performers - named as Accenture, Barclays, EY, Gentoo, Goldman Sachs, Home Office, IBM and Simmons & Simmons - will lead the development of best practice in Britain and around the world.

Star Performers recognises the work of these eight organisations, who have consistently been ranked as top-ten gay-friendly workplaces in the annual Workplace Equality Index.

Star Performers lead their industry and will now work with Stonewall on pioneering initiatives that will define best practice for tomorrow. From launching global campaigns to revolutionising service delivery, Stonewall's Star Performer organisations will share their expertise and pave the way for other organisations to follow.

Star Performers will actively mentor another employer who is working to create a workplace culture that's inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people. Through regular contact, the two organisations will develop strategies to transform workplace cultures across the country.

EDUCATION Birmingham primary schools say yes to scheme promoting gay and lesbian rights

More than 30 primary schools in Birmingham have signed up to a scheme aiming to promote gay and lesbian rights.

The Birmingham Mail reports: 'Education Secretary Nicky Morgan has controversially told all schools to teach 'British values' - including tolerance to homosexuality. But the new rules, introduced in the wake of the Trojan Horse scandal in Birmingham, has been met with mixed reaction - with some parents reacting in anger to the move.

'Jamie Barry, head teacher at Welford School in Handsworth, was confronted by more than 100 angry parents worried about pupils being taught about homosexuality through a new range of teaching materials called Chips - Challenging Homophobia in Primary Schools.

'The programme was adopted by Welford after pupils told Ofsted inspectors that they thought it was wrong to be gay during a snap inspection of the school in May.

'Welford was one of 21 schools in Birmingham inspected in the Trojan Horse scandal over claims headline Muslims were taking over governing bodies. Welford was given a clean bill of health, but inspectors did report on pupils' attitude to sexuality,

'Mr Barry said: "While we respect everyone's right to a personal view, same-sex marriage is legal and some same-sex couples adopt or foster. Our children will come into contact with these people and we don't want it to be a shock to the system."

'Chips, which is used in 36 Birmingham primary schools, is the brainchild of teacher Andrew Moffatt, and sees story books being used to teach children about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

'Meanwhile, a similar project called Educate And Celebrate is being taught at the city's secondary schools - including Dame Elizabeth Cadbury School in Bournville. The school is leading the way -

and has worked with the Crown Prosecution Service to create a teachers' resource pack on how to tackle homophobic language in schools. And the school recently held a Spirit Day, which saw all pupils dressed in something purple to show support for LGBT youngsters who have been bullied.

'Deputy Head Teacher Claire Stoneman said: "Our school has come a long way. Two years ago, it was fairly commonplace to hear the word 'gay' in school being used negatively as a synonym for something rubbish or worthless. Some students experienced homophobic comments, language and abuse. Two years later, after a zero-tolerance approach to homophobic language and a real push on being 'upstanders' for our LGBT friends not bystanders to bullying, we flew the rainbow flag at school for the first time as a symbol of Spirit Day. It was a hugely proud day for our whole school community."

ENTERTAINMENT Shropshire Rainbow Film Festival to screen Big Eden in Market Drayton

Shropshire Rainbow Film Festival's second-ever screening outside of Shrewsbury will take place in Market Drayton.

Big Eden, a film set in cowboy country, will be shown at the Festival Drayton Centre on Wednesday 26 January at 7.30pm. Big Eden is a tiny town tucked away in the timberland of north-western Montana where cowboys lounge on the porch of the general store to pass the time away.

It's also the childhood home of Henry Hart, a successful but lonely New York artist who returns to the town to take care of his ailing grandfather.

Henry confronts his unrequited passion for his high school best friend and his feelings about being gay in a small town. But the Big Eden residents defy the stereotype of 'small



town, small minds'. As Henry works through his emotions, the townspeople quietly conspire to help him along...

Commenting on the movie, Rainbow Film Festival organisers said: 'Big Eden is similar to Brokeback Mountain but with a positive ending to the story. It's definitely a feelgood and heartwarming film for the New Year. Not to be missed!'

ARTS New Leicestershire plaque pays tribute to gay Monty Python star

A plaque commemorating gay comedian Graham Chapman's years spent in the Leicestershire town of Melton Mowbray has been unveiled by his Monty Python co-star, Michael Palin.

The Leicester Mercury reports: 'Graham played the title role in *The Life Of Brian* and spent about seven years living in Melton as a teenager in the 1950s.

'Pole To Pole presenter Palin paid tribute to his fellow Python, who died from cancer in 1989. Michael said: "Graham was a terrifically good actor and he had that ability to look so conventional and then do something outrageous. He was a serious pipe smoker who knew a lot about medicine - but then in the next moment he would be dancing in a tutu! The great sadness is that he would've been a wonderful old man."

ARTS Homosexuality explored in new West Mids dance project

This month sees Birmingham-based Rutherford Dance Company Youth (RDC Youth) begin a project researching how communities throughout the West Midlands have reacted to homosexuality over the past five centuries.

Supported by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £28,000, the company will explore the political, social and personal context of coming out. Gathering stories from the older LGBT generation, RDC Youth will then interpret their findings via a large-scale dance performance in the summer. The entire project will be filmed for DVD and archive purposes.

Recorded personal interviews will be made available through the Birmingham LGBT Centre.

SPORT Nottingham football competition sees gay-friendly players 'up for the cup'

Amateur footballers from across the country recently flew a rainbow flag in Nottingham during a national competition.

The Gay Football Supporters Network's Super Saturday Cup saw gay-friendly teams battling it out to reach the semi-finals of the tournament.

The event seeks to promote inclusion in sport.

Speaking to the Nottingham Post, Scott Lawley, chairman of gay-friendly team Nottingham Ball Boys, said: "When it's the quarter-finals they try to do all of them in one city and coincide it with a Christmas get-to-

gether. We've got people travelling from various parts of the country and we're hosting them.

"It promotes inclusion in football. You will get some people who've had problems with discrimination in football before, and this is a place where they can feel included. In many ways it's a social thing too."

Also speaking to the Post, Leviathen Hendricks, Secretary & Fangroups Coordinator at the Gay Football Supporters' Network, said: "We started 25 years ago as a social network for gay fans that supported football and wanted to get to-

gether. We've grown throughout the years. People have started realising they enjoy playing football. Teams have popped up around the country. It's gone from strength to strength. People talk about there being no openly gay footballers - well, we know hundreds of them playing at grass-roots level!

"It's carefully considered as to where the games should be hosted. We always hear great things from people who come to Nottingham about it being a friendly and fun city - it's a very natural place for us to come."

NATIONAL NEWS

CRIME Homophobic hate speech: Top cop warns against 'thought police'

The chief constable of Greater Manchester police has warned that broad laws banning hate speech risk a drift towards an Orwellian "thought police".

PinkNews.co.uk reports: 'Police chief Sir Peter Fahy made the claims in an interview with the Guardian, in which he warned that laws left it open to interpretation whether anti-gay Christians were committing hate speech.

'He said society needed to better define what constituted hate speech, saying: "There is a danger of us being turned into a thought police. When does anti-Israeli protest become anti-Semitic? How far is it okay to challenge homosexuality, women's rights? How far is it okay to advocate violent action abroad?" These are difficult issues for Muslims and the Catholic Church... Extremism is not just about Muslims, there are a lot of right-wing extremists.

"If that speaker says all homosexuals are sinful, are mentally defective, need reprogramming and are a threat to society, is that preaching hatred?"

'Sir Peter added that the best solution was for individual institutions to create policies banning hate speech: "The police service does not want to be in school or on university campuses controlling thought. The best way to avoid this is for such institutions to know the messages which are being promoted. And for student bodies to have policies on whether preaching hatred towards homosexuality, allowing segregated meetings or advocating violent action overseas is acceptable or not."

HEALTH HIV now less deadly, reveals study

HIV is evolving to become less deadly and less infectious, according to a major scientific study.

BBC News reports: 'The team at the University of Oxford showed the virus is being "watered down" as it adapts to our immune systems. It said it was taking longer for HIV infection to cause AIDS and that the changes in the virus may help efforts to contain the pandemic.

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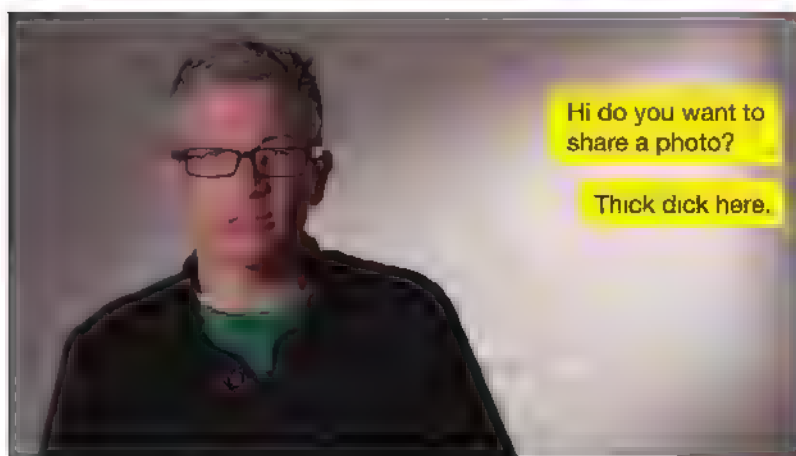
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THE VIRAL ROUND-UP

Here's what we've been looking at online...

We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often, we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!

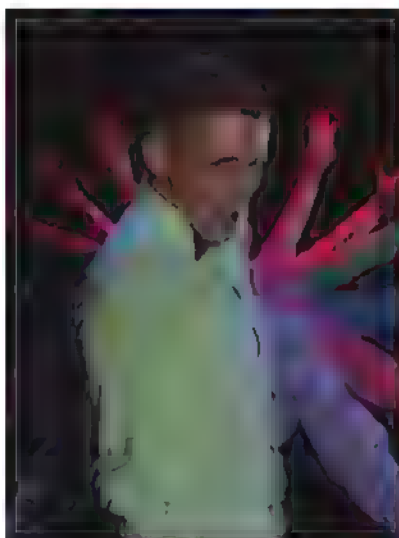
WATCH THIS! The best video we've been watching this month...



Many of you are familiar with the popular dating app, Grindr - but how funny do you think it would be if a group of female comics read out the messages you've been sending? Well, we can tell you it'd be pretty damn funny! Check it out: youtu.be/VnuE1KUI-E

CHECK THIS OUT! The fantastic gay Pitch Perfect spoof you never knew about...

In this fantastic gay spoof of hit film Pitch Perfect, the tops and bottoms go head to head in Bitch Perfect. In this three-minute-long video, the 'Bottom Notes' recruit Toderick Hall into their singing group to take on the 'tops'. After viewing it, you'll be wishing it was longer than three minutes! Watch here: youtu.be/NcJMdlcuBus





WE SIT DOWN WITH GAY YOUTUBE SENSATION
TYLER OAKLEY

Twenty-five-year-old Tyler Oakley began uploading videos to his YouTube channel as a way of keeping in touch with his friends. His videos got far more views than he had friends - since which time this cheeky chappy has become a much-loved YouTube sensation. Now with nearly 6,000,000 subscribers to his YouTube channel and over 303,000,000 video views, Tyler is an unstoppable online force. He took time out to talk to Midlands Zone...

Before achieving massive success as a YouTuber, what was the Tyler Oakley life plan?

I actually went to university to run social media for brands. I've always loved marketing and brand strategy. When I got my degree, I was ready to use that to help nonprofits and startups. Now I just do it for my own brand.

What was your motivation behind creating YouTube videos in the early days?

I initially started just to keep in touch with friends from high school when I went off to university. It was a way to speak directly to them, tell them stories and show them my new friends. It started off as a diary. In the past seven years I think I've stayed pretty true to that mission - just now on a more global scale.

"A boy in Tyler Oakley's life? Heck, no. I like men, not boys. And I go for guys who can make me laugh, who have ambitions and dreams, a charming smile and maybe some stubble."

You have nearly 6,000,000 subscribers and a staggering 303,000,000 views on YouTube. Did you ever imagine your videos would become this popular?

Never. It was never the dream. It blows my mind that it's happening now. I'm so appreciative and I'm so eager to meet all the people who made those numbers a reality.

At what point did you think "Woah, this is getting crazy"?

The first time was when I had 100 views on a single video. I didn't have 100 friends, so it opened my eyes to the fact that strangers could find me on the internet. I also remember being at a university football game. I looked around, knowing that the stadium could accommodate 75,000 people, and realised that I had more subscribers than that. It's sometimes hard to visualise the amount of people who tune in - but when I thought of it in that way, it blew my mind.

From where do you get your inspiration for your videos?

Because it's always been a diary, I use my life as inspiration. The most exciting thing about going to the White House for a meeting with the President was being able to come back

home and share that experience with the millions of people who made it possible. I'm also inspired by pop culture - one of my passions - and by my own viewers, who help me curate PO Box videos and Q&As.

Whose YouTube videos do you most enjoy watching?

I love so many YouTubers, but some of my favourites include Miranda Sings, Marnie Hart, Corey Kuhl, Levi Bernhard, Hannah Hart, Zoella, Ben J. Pierce. I love so many people basically all of #TeamInternet.

As a result of your YouTube fame, you've met a lot of cool people, including Jessie J, Barack and Michelle Obama, Darren Criss and, of course, One Direction. Who's been your favourite?

I've got to say Julie Chen. She's always been someone I've looked up to because of her hosting and interviewing skills on Big Brother and The Talk. When I finally got to meet her, she was so kind, present, fun and warm. To me, she's someone whose career I admire - and she offered me such amazing advice.

What's been the highlight of your YouTube career?

I was able to raise \$525,000 for the Trevor Project for my 25th birthday. Because of that, they honoured me and my people with the Trevor Youth Innovator Award. I accepted it with my parents in the audience. Definitely one of my proudest moments.

You've got lots of fans, as we know. How do you handle the fame?

I'm really lucky that I have such a respectful group of people following my story. They keep me grounded, appreciative and positive. I also try to surround myself with people who help me stay focused and who make sure I take care of myself. I'm a workaholic, so making sure that I have offline time is a high priority - at least for the people on my team.

Your hair has become almost as important to the Tyler Oakley brand as Tyler Oakley himself. Do you spend lots of time in the mirror getting ready?

No! I wake up late and am always rushing to get out the door to make it to various commitments. So I actually spend maybe a minute on my hair. Maybe that's part of the mystique?

You're a big advocate for The Trevor Project, which you've already mentioned. The charity's aim is to prevent LGBT youth suicides. Why is the organisation so close to your heart?

It's always been important to me because I think about the people they help and how much of that

could be included in my audience. I meet people all around the world at meetups or conventions who tell me that my videos helped them. I want them to know that they're never alone - that there's a way someone they can turn to when times are tough.

What advice would you give to someone who's struggling to come to terms with their sexuality?

Do it at your own pace. Although it's brave to publicly and unapologetically be yourself, it's also brave to know when the time is right for you to come out, based on issues of safety and security.

Is there a boy in Tyler Oakley's life? What type of guy do you go for?

A boy in Tyler Oakley's life? Heck, no. I like men, not boys. And I go for guys who can make me laugh, who have ambitions and dreams, a charming smile and maybe some stubble.

What's your idea of a perfect date?

Sweatpants. Chinese takeout food. Scrabble and red wine.

If you could take a selfie with anyone living or dead, who would it be?

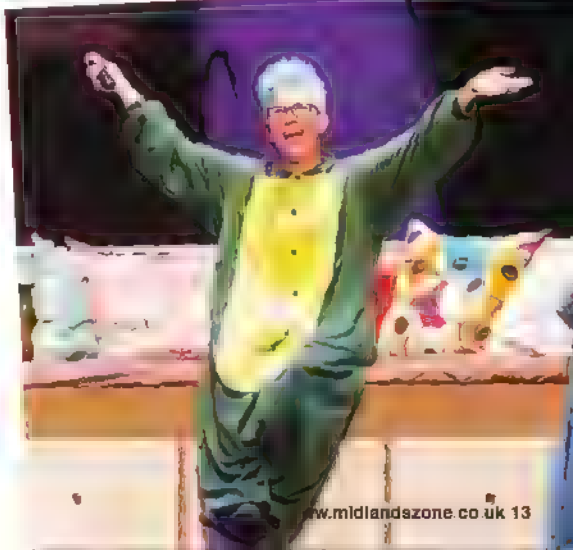
I'd probably have to say Oprah.

What would you like to achieve in 2015?
World domination.

Finally, will you be coming back to the UK soon?

Sooner than you think.

You can watch Tyler's fantastic YouTube videos every Sunday on Channel 4. www.youtube.com/tylroakley





Cameron Mackintosh

The modern-day Barnum talks musicals, money and more



From the tender age of eight, when his aunt took him to see a matinee performance of *Salad Days*, Sir Cameron Mackintosh knew that he wanted to be a theatre producer. The openly gay British producer was the first to be inducted into the Broadway Hall of Fame and has produced some of the world's most successful musicals, including *Cats*, *Miss Saigon*, *The Phantom Of The Opera* and *Les Miserables*. He recently took time out of his busy schedule to talk to Midlands Zone about his revival production of *Barnum*, which stars Brian Conley and visits two Midlands venues in 2015...

What lies behind the decision to bring *Barnum* back to the stage, Cameron?

I've got a very long connection with *Barnum* which is fairly tenuous. One of the first musicals I did, back in 1973, was called *The Card*, which was written by Tony Hatch and Jack e Trent. I was discussing having the lead played by Michael Crawford, who ended up doing another show called *Billy* instead. So I was wracking my brains to think of who I would get to do it. Suddenly I remembered that I'd seen a young Jim Dale do a marvellous show called *Scapino* at the Young Vic. So I put him in *The Card* and he was terrific. The show was a reasonable success, and the great American producer David Merrick came and saw it. David

had been asked about producing *Barnum* in the US. He put Jim Dale in the show as *Barnum*, and this unknown Englishman became the toast of Broadway. The show was wonderful, and because of my connection with Jim, I went to see it and fell in love with it. It's always been there in the back of my mind and, of course, there's a bit of PT Barnum in me as well.

So how does this new staging differ from the original?

If you know *Barnum* at all, you know him of *Barnum & Bailey's Circus*, but he didn't join the circus until he was sixty-five. Before that, he was a great showman. He was also quite an

influential politician, in first the Democrat and then the Republican party. In fact, he was one of the first people involved in getting Abraham Lincoln elected. He fought for very many causes: the emancipation of women, the abolition of slavery and all sorts of things, a lot of which are touched on in the show. It's essentially about these amazing dreams that *Barnum* had, and about his very practical wife, Charley, who made his dreams come true. There's a real love story about a very extraordinary couple in the middle of this incredible fable about a man who can't help thinking up these wonderful ideas. Those are the themes that have haunted me over the years. I was idly playing the music one day and thought, it's funny that we haven't heard this

show for twenty-five years, because it's such a wonderful life-affirming score and a really lovely story. What I wanted to do was actually strengthen the love story between Barnum and Charity, so I did some reworking with American theatre director and producer Mark Bramble rebuilding the second act of the show. The rebuilding's worked really well.

My first memories of watching the show with Jim Dale was of a very unknown Glenn Close playing his wife. I never thought that the role of Charity was as good in any subsequent shows I saw, because Glenn being a phenomenal actress brought something really special to the part. Thereafter, Barnum was always thought of as a one-man show - very entertaining but not much of a story. I think having someone as good as Linzi Hateley playing Charity and rebuilding the emotional core of the show, works really well. We've put some new numbers into the show for when she dies and Barnum has a nervous breakdown. It's had this fantastic reception from the audience since it re-opened in Leicester a few weeks ago.

You've re-worked Miss Saigon, The Phantom Of The Opera and now Barnum. What are your main considerations when setting out to re-work a very well-known show?

I re-imagined the staging for the new Phantom and Miss Saigon. In the latter, Claude-Michel and Alain wrote a new song for Ellen, but we didn't really change the structure of the show at all. It was literally that. We looked at the language for the new London production and we tightened it up. It was written twenty-five years ago and we wanted it to have a bit more edge. Basically, both Saigon and Phantom were the same shows that were written twenty-five years ago. With Barnum, I felt it needed a much more radical rethink to put the love story of the husband and wife more central stage to the telling of Barnum's tale.

Broadly speaking, Miss Saigon is historical, Phantom is fictional, Barnum is biographical. What draws you to a story? Are there common themes and elements to a story that you choose to bring to the stage?

Most of the shows I've done have been based on adaptations of classic material - whether it be Dickens, PL Travers, Hugo or whoever. I don't normally do biography musicals, and don't know whether I would have done it originally. The connect on I found in Barnum is that, being a showman myself, I understand how important it is to have a relationship. It's not all about the work, it's about how you live your life. That's the theme that I found in it. I normally produce much more serious musicals, like Oliver! and Miss Saigon. With Mary Poppins, I always thought PL Travers' book had considerably more depth - there was more to be got out of it than the original film had presented. I loved the film, and I thought that the music written for the film was brilliant, but it was of its time. I had no interest in putting it on the stage. Nor would PL Travers - who never wanted the book to be turned into a film ever have allowed it. She was ninety-three when she gave me the rights. I said I would never want to do it on stage unless I could

bring the best of the music from the film into the stage score and create a new show, which I think is the reason it's been such a great success. It's a mixture of the best things from the film and the best things from her book. Out of two existing things we've made something new - something which continues to be a great success around the world.

And is there a story that got away?

I did try and pursue Dr Zhivago for quite a long time but the rights were never available. Someone's had them for many years and keeps having a go at it, but I believe it may end up on Broadway next year. That's a show that I seriously did look at. I love the David Lean film and it's a fascinating book, but I think it would be a tricky one to do.

"I love showbusiness but I don't want it to take over my life. I'm as interested in building houses as putting on shows."

You're the richest producer in the history of musical theatre. How do you remain grounded?

To be honest, as I spent so many years wondering if I could afford the petrol to go from one theatre to another, I'm constantly amazed that I can afford to do whatever I want. My sense of value is still there and I don't spend all my time in the theatre. When I started out, I wanted to make a living and I wanted to be successful, like anyone does in any business but I never thought of making lots of money. So the fact that I've ended up making more money than I could ever have imagined is something quite surreal. I'm only occasionally reminded of it. I live in nice houses and I can more or less go wherever I want and do what I want, but I love living in the country. I love showbusiness, but I don't want it to take over my life. I'm as interested in building houses as putting on shows. I'm not caught up in the web of showbusiness glamour, in fact, I rarely ever do it. I throw a good party for opening night but I'm not interested in being in OK magazine and all of that showbusiness stuff. I think that's helped me. Plus I've got some very good people helping me - they do most of the work that keeps my empire around the world ticking. They may have to choose their moment, but they know me well enough to tell me not to be an ass. I like to think I don't give them too much of an opportunity to do so, but we can all get carried away at times and need people to say to us "Stop! That's not right!" But the trappings have never interested me; I'd much rather be spending time at home. I'm quite reclusive - and interestingly enough, so was PT Barnum, the greatest showman of all time. He would only go and do the hoopla when it was

for his own show. Otherwise he built himself nice houses and went home and had a kitchen supper. So I think we share a few more things in common.

What's your favourite way to wind down?

To be honest, the luxury is having the time to myself and being with my friends. I'm equally happy wandering the hills in Scotland or the lovely countryside in Somerset. I switch off very easily and I've never had a problem relaxing and swimming and lying on the beach reading a tawdry book. I remember that even when I was twenty and didn't have two pennies to rub together, I would never not go on holiday. I've always thought that that was as important as doing the work. That's what's kept me sane. I still go shopping. I enjoy doing that and seeing the prices of things. Yes, I can afford a private jet and from time to time I take it - mainly to save time - but when I don't need to, I get on the shuttle or go Easy Jet or whatever, because there's no reason not to. Also, I find there's part of me that feels it's worth knowing what things cost, to know what the price of a theatre ticket means to the people who've given me this fortunate lifestyle. I think it's very important, and that's why I'm fanatical that a show - wherever it's going - is not only as good as possible but also hopefully better than what audiences have heard.

And that people think it's a money well spent?

Exactly! And that's why I'm thrilled with all the reaction to Brian and Linzi in Barnum. We've received lovely letters from people who've said they loved it with Michael Crawford but that they also love the differences, and that this production is just as good but in a different way. It's different to the original production and that's what I wanted it to be.

Where does being inducted into Broadway's Hall Of Fame rank in terms of career highs?

As a little boy of eight who wanted to become a producer, having a show in London was on my list of dreams - but this never was. I believe I'm the only English producer who's been given that accolade, so I was very, very touched to have that. I've had, and continue to have, a wonderful career in America, which has been a very important part of my life.

If you could choose one single scene from one of your shows to watch in your final moments on earth, which scene would you choose and why?

I think it would probably have to be the finale of Les Misérables, because it's such a wonderfully uplifting piece of music. It's about coming together, the past and the future. It's about the people in your lives being forever young once you go beyond the barricade. As a piece of music, it's very embracing.

Barnum shows at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre from Tuesday 27 Saturday 31 January and Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 7 July to Saturday 1 August.

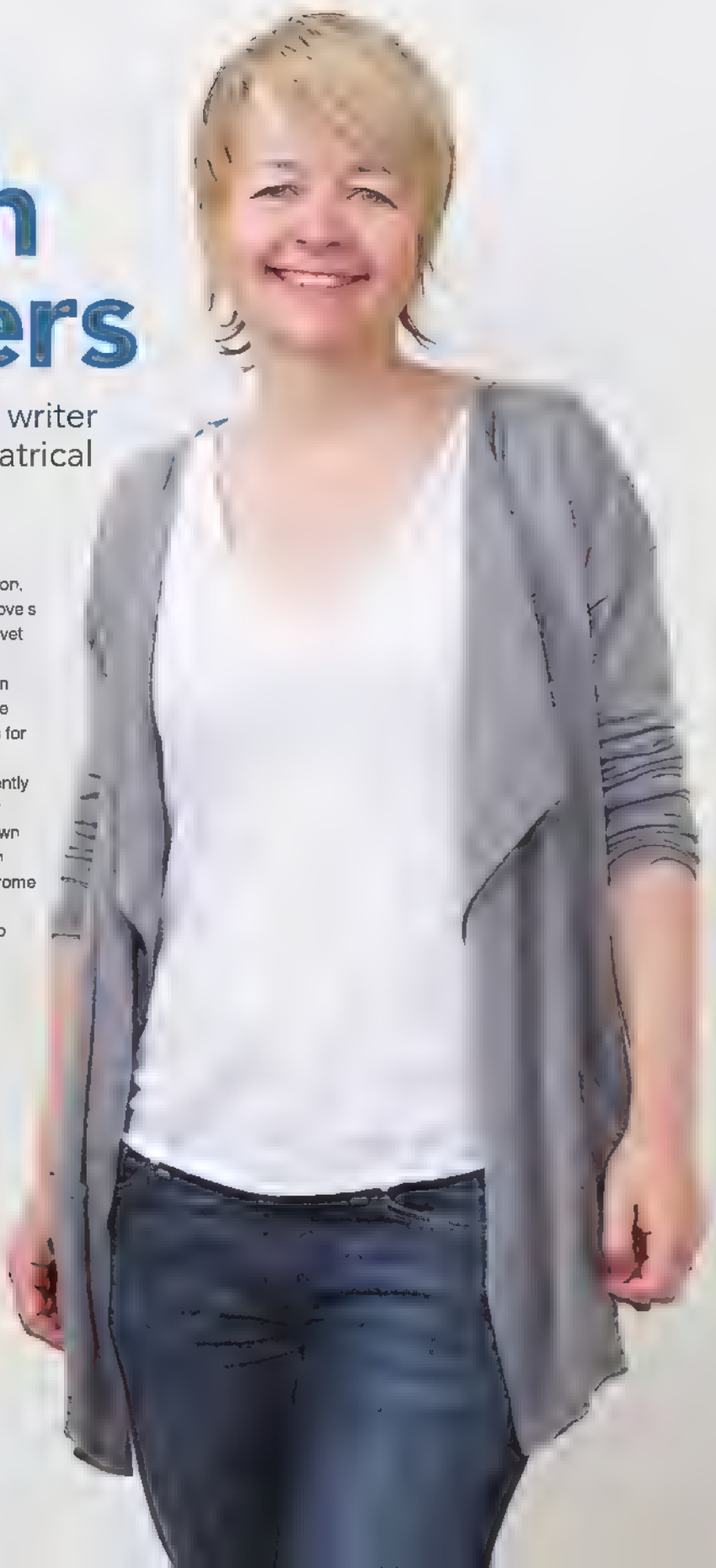
Sarah Waters

The lesbian fiction writer brings her first theatrical production to Birmingham...

A well-established writer of lesbian fiction, Sarah Waters has six award-winning novels to her name, including *Tipping the Velvet* and *Fingersmith*. With a penchant for research, she likes to give her books an historical slant, very much favouring the Victorian era and the 1920s as settings for her novels.

Venturing into new territory, Sarah recently joined forces with writer and performer Christopher Green to adapt a little-known mystery story for the stage. *The Frozen Scream* shows at Birmingham Hippodrome this month.

Midlands Zone caught up with Sarah to find out more.



How did your partnership with Christopher Green come about?

I'd known him as a performer for many years and had seen him in many productions. I'd always admired him because he's got a great stage presence. He approached me a few years ago with the idea for *The Frozen Scream*. He wanted someone who'd collaborate with him on a spooky show. He'd read a book of mine called *The Little Stranger*, which is a ghost story. He'd liked that and felt I might be a good fit with him. I thought it was a brilliant idea, but we both had different projects on the go and I'd just started a new novel. We only came back to it again in 2014, when he'd got the Birmingham Hippodrome and Mennium Theatre in Cardiff on board. Only then did it really take off. I'd finished my book by then, so it was perfect timing for me.

This is your first venture into playwriting. Did you have any preconceived idea of what it would be like?

I was quite trepidatious. As a novelist, you're in complete control of every detail. I take a long time to write a book. I really enjoy having space to make mistakes and try things out, so I wondered if a collaboration would suit me. On the whole I don't like writing to a deadline, but I knew that we really needed to commit to it and come up with a play. I was nervous, but everything's worked well. The collaboration has been really interesting and a real pleasure. Chris has been great to work with and I think we've got a lot in common. Right from the very beginning we had a very clear, shared vision of what we wanted the play to be, so there haven't been any upsets or disagreements. It's all been very smooth. It's been great seeing the different stages of it: from writing the script through to casting it, workshoping it, then through to the rehearsal stage we're at now. Each of those stages has brought something extra to the original text.

What's the main consideration when thinking about an audience as opposed to a reader?

I'm very much a storyteller, which is what Chris liked and wanted. So for me it was a case of working out how to tell a story in a completely different way to how I'd tell it in a novel, where it's just words on a page. In a novel you're evoking everything and can guide your readers along a very particular path. In the theatre you've got lots of people who might all be looking in different directions. You want a story to unfold but it's got to be done in a very visual way. It was a big challenge, but I'm a great theatre goer, so I suppose I just thought about what I want from a night at the theatre.

The play is very character-based. How far do you take the prose before the actor comes in and takes over?

Again, I like to create the characters from the point of telling a story. Chris and I worked on the characters; what we wanted them to be and what their back-stories were. Bringing in an actor does bring another layer of richness to it, but you do need the characters to be quite strong in the original text. That's most definitely what we were aiming for.

The *Frozen Scream* and your latest novel, *The Paying Guests*, are both set in the 1920s. What intrigues you most about that

particular era?

I started work on *The Frozen Scream* after I'd finished *The Paying Guests*, so it was great because I had all that grounding in the 1920s. In *The Paying Guests* I very deliberately didn't look at the roaring 20s flappers and the jazz age and that sort of thing. It was far more suburban than that. *The Frozen Scream* is more in the realm of flappers and bright young things, so it was a very nice counterpart to *The Paying Guest*. I felt like I got to tell a slightly different '20s story.

The *Frozen Scream* is based on a little-known mystery which is said to be cursed. Are you at all superstitious?

Christopher is being very blasé about the curse. I was worried at first and thought 'Oh my God, we're going to create a curse ourselves!'. Touch wood though, it's all gone to plan so far and we're brazing the curse out. I don't know whether that's sensible or not, but that's what we're doing. We don't want to frighten people off and we don't want people to be anxious about it, but it's definitely an element of the show.

Much of your work has been adapted for the screen. Do you feel an urge to give consideration to this when writing new work?

I suppose I'd be lying if I said it didn't occur to me that a novel I'm writing might be adapted, but it doesn't affect what I write. I tend to write very visually anyway, so maybe my books naturally lend themselves to adaptation. When I was writing *The Nightwatch*, for example, which was a couple of books ago now - it was quite a melancholy book. I didn't think anybody would want to adapt it for TV - eventually somebody did - but that didn't mean that I didn't want to write it. I still wanted to write the book that was in my heart. It doesn't change the way I write a book but it's definitely a consideration.

When you're writing a book, you have complete ownership. Do you ever feel like you're giving away part of yourself when you present it to your readers?

I don't know, but I pour so much into my novels. What I want is for readers to respond emotionally to the book, and it's always wonderful when they do. I think everyone who reads a book slightly re-writes it when they're reading it - and certainly when a book is adapted for the screen, it goes through a translation process and becomes somebody else's book in a way. For me, the heart of writing is that initial work - having a vision, then doing the work so that I can realise that vision on the page. As long as I've produced the book that I've set out to produce, I'm happy.

Are any of your characters based on people in the present, transported back in time?

No, not really. My characters may have their basis in somebody I know but I find that they undergo a change. So although I've maybe done that once or twice, I hope they haven't ended up recognisable to anybody in the real world. But you do have to take your inspiration from real life, so it's inevitable that you take little traits from various people and weave them into your characters.

It's a real credit to you that two of your best-

known works, *Tipping The Velvet* and *Fingersmith*, are being adapted for the stage. Have you been asked to contribute anything to the process?

Not creatively - which is fine by me, because I didn't really want that role, but I've definitely been involved in the process and I've seen drafts of the plays. With *Tipping The Velvet*, I sat in on an early workshop. It was really interesting and really exciting seeing the book come to life in a completely different form.

Did you have the same level of involvement when it was adapted for TV?

Yeah, same sort of thing. I didn't want to be involved creatively but it was fascinating to see the process that a book undergoes when it's adapted. That was especially true with *Tipping The Velvet*, because that was the first time it had happened and I was still quite a young author at the time. It was terribly exciting and I've been very happy with the adaptations. They've been very positive experiences.

There's a lot of erotica in your works. How much does that contribute to the production's success?

With *Tipping The Velvet*, it was certainly a selling point. Andrew Davies, who adapted it, did more than anybody to big it up as a rather raunchy show. I don't think it did any harm and it certainly got lots of attention.

Your first four novels centre on lesbian relationships. You then move away from this in *The Little Stranger* but return to the format in *The Paying Guests*. Was this a conscious decision?

It's just the way it came out. I'd missed it but felt it didn't have a place in *The Little Stranger* which was a Gothic story. But I did miss 'desire', which is a really good driver of a plot. I kind of wanted to get back to it and tell a story of domestic passions, so it seemed the most natural thing to write a lesbian story again.

Looking to future novels, is there an era in history on which you'd really like to focus?

I'm really not sure where I'm going to go for the next novel, and it's really quite nice not knowing. I've thought for a while that the 1950s seem quite appealing. We tend to think of that time as being rather conservative, but I think there was probably a lot more interesting stuff going on than our stereotypes suggest. So that might be an interesting subject to explore.

Has your current experience with Chris and *The Frozen Scream* given you an appetite for more of the same in the future?

Possibly. It certainly feels like it's liberated in me a slightly different way of writing, which is very nice. I think I've been very lucky with the project, and Chris and I have worked well together. It's a project that's really suited me, so if I find another that also suits me, I'll certainly be happy to do another theatre piece. I also feel a slight sting to write another novel, so as soon as *The Frozen Scream* is finished that's probably where I'll go next. Who knows, though? I've so enjoyed writing for the theatre, I wouldn't want to think I'd never do it again.



It's time to vote! The Midlands Zone Readers' Awards are back!

Yes, it's that Midlands Zone Readers' Awards time of year again, folks! We all have our favourite Midlands gay bars, clubs, stores, people, personalities and charities - and this is your chance to show how much you appreciate them. Nominate and vote for your favourites to help them secure a title worthy of their work!



Every year, thousands of you step up to the plate and vote for your favourites in the Midlands LGBT community - and if you want to do the same in 2015, you've only got until Monday 19 January to take part in the first round of voting.

Once we publish the February issue, we will be re-opening the voting with the TOP FIVE in each category. All votes must be submitted online before Friday 27 February.

And don't forget to enter our

FREE PRIZE DRAW for your chance to win a seven day all-inclusive holiday, with flights, to sunny Gran Canaria - worth over £1200!

To enter, simply vote online and then complete our online readership survey.

The results of the Midlands Zone Readers' Awards will be announced at an awards ceremony to take place in March. Keep your eyes peeled for more information!

HOW TO VOTE:

SIMPLY LOG ON TO:
www.midlandszone.co.uk

The top finalists in each category will be selected on **MONDAY 19 JANUARY** and published in the February issue. The voting will then continue until Friday 27 February 2015.

This year's categories

- Best Birmingham Gay Nightclub
- Best Midlands Gay Nightclub (Outside B'ham)
- Best Birmingham Gay Bar
- Best Midlands Gay Bar (Outside B'ham)
- Best Midlands Community Pub / Bar
- Best Midlands Café Bar / Restaurant
- Best Midlands Overall Gay Venue
- Best Midlands Venue for Men
- Best Midlands Venue for Women
- Best Midlands Live Entertainment Venue
- Best Midlands Gay Venue - Outdoor Area
- Best Midlands One-Nighter
- Best New Midlands Gay Venue
- Best Midlands LGBT Pride Event
- Best Midlands LGBT Event
- Midlands LGBT Charity / Group of Achievement
- Midlands LGBT Social / Sports Group
- Midlands LGBT Personality of the Year
- Best Midlands Compere / Host
- Best Midlands Cabaret Act
- Midlands Friendliest Bar Person
- Midlands LGBT Venue with the Friendliest Bar Staff
- Midlands Friendliest Security / Door Person
- Midlands LGBT Venue with the Best Security Door Staff
- Midlands Bar DJ
- Midlands Club DJ
- Midlands Gay Sauna / Health Club
- Midlands LGBT Friendly Store or Online Store
- Youth Achievement Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Outstanding Contribution to the LGBT Community

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New Year, New You: Birmingham LGBT's new Sport England project

Birmingham LGBT Centre



Eager to exercise? Needing to fight the festive flab? Serious about a sexy six-pack? If so, Birmingham LGBT's Sports England-funded three-year fitness and sports project could well be your best starting point.

The project was launched last year for anyone thinking about taking up exercise or trying a new sport. It includes a variety of fitness classes based at Birmingham LGBT's city centre premises, monthly taster sessions with existing LGBT sports clubs across the city and special Pride In Sport days.

The project is being supported by £142,788 of National Lottery funding from Sport England's Community Sport Activation Fund.

Designed in response to local demand, the fund allows local authorities, charities and other organisations to apply for funding for innovative projects that will get more people playing sport.

Commenting on the project, Mike Diaper, Sport England Director of Community Sport, said: "It's great to be working with innovative projects like LGBT Community Sports Activator to offer people the chance to get into sport in a way that best suits them."

"The investment being made through the Community Sport Activation Fund is making a real difference at a very local level. I'm particularly pleased that more than half the funding is going into projects in deprived areas, helping more people develop a lifelong sporting habit."

Mike's thoughts are echoed by Penny Barber, the recently appointed LGBT Community Sports Activator. "There's going to be something for everyone," says Penny. "Whatever your current level of confidence, activity or skill, we will ensure there's a safe space to decide and develop your fitness goals."

So what's currently available to would-be participants?

"So far we've set up a beginners' mixed ability

gym course and a yoga course in The Vault, which is located in the Birmingham LGBT Centre," explains Penny. "These are proving very popular. We're also planning a rotating programme of beginners' courses in tai chi, yoga, pilates and mindfulness & meditation. We've set a date for a competitive Pride In Sport event too - Saturday 18 April, at the University of Birmingham."

"And we're also developing a cycling offer in partnership with Birmingham City Council's Big Birmingham Bikes project - so there's already plenty going on with lots more to come."

The Vault is Birmingham LGBT Centre's dedicated fitness hub



For further information, email
pennybarber@bglbt.org or 0121 6430821

The Partners

Birmingham LGBT

Birmingham LGBT is a voluntary sector organisation with a mission to build a vibrant and diverse LGBT community in Birmingham, allowing individuals to realise their full potential and have equal access to all the city has to offer. An umbrella body for 35 LGBT voluntary and community groups, the organisation's core purpose is to develop the capacity of the local LGBT community and to influence those organisations and services which affect the quality of life of its members.

Sport England

Sport England is focused on helping people and communities across the country create a sporting habit for life. Between 2012 and 2017, it's investing over £1 billion of National Lottery and Exchequer funding in organisations and projects that will help more people have a sporting habit for life. Create more opportunities for young people to play sport. Nurture and develop talent. Provide the right facilities in the right places. Support local authorities and unlock local funding. Ensure real opportunities for communities.

Sport England's Community Sport Activation Fund is investing a total of £47.5 million of funding over five funding rounds. Already 156 projects have shared in £27.2 million of funding over three rounds, receiving grants of between £50,000 and £250,000 to provide grassroots sport at a very local level.

National Lottery

The National Lottery has been changing lives for eighteen years, with National Lottery players raising over £30 million per week.



activate

New Year, New (fit) You!

FREE daytime and evening beginners' courses in Tai Chi, Yoga, Body Conditioning & Fitness, Pilates, Cycling, Running, Walking

Drop in yoga Mondays 11am to noon starting 12th January

Book NOW for Tai Chi starting 7th Jan for 4 weeks and Body Conditioning & Fitness starting 12th Jan for 6 weeks

Are you encouraging and empowering? Can you remember how scary trying something new is? Support your community by volunteering with Activate!

For more information contact pennybarber@blgbt.org **0121 643 0821**

Project Partners include:-

Midlands Out Badminton, Moseley Shoals Swim Group, Birmingham Bluefins Water Polo, Birmingham Blaze Football Team, Birmingham Bulls Rugby Team, Boot Women (walking), Birmingham Swifts (running), Same Sex Strictly, Outdoor Lads, Birmingham City Council & University of Birmingham Sport.

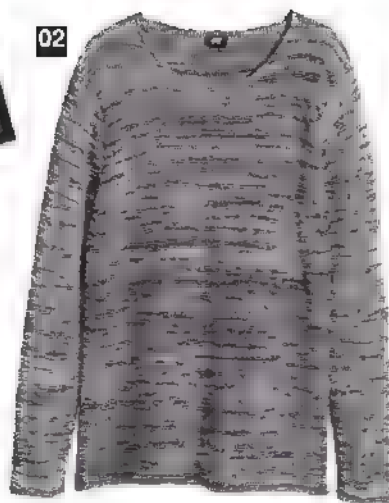


www.blgbt.org **0121 643 0821**

Birmingham LGBT Centre, 38/40 Holloway Circus B1 1EQ



IT'S ALL BLACK AND WHITE



Why not get with the winter colour scheme by wearing black, white and grey? Here are some of our favourite monochrome pieces...

01 Black Statement T-Shirt

You're sure to make a statement with this black-and-white Statement tee from Burton. The short-sleeved black t-shirt features a high-contrast print and is great worn with a casual pair of jeans.

£12
www.burton.co.uk

02 Purl-knit Jumper

H&M step into the monochrome mainstream with this great-looking purl-knit jumper. It's made from marled cotton with reverse-stitched details and raw edges. It looks great as a slim-fit top and just as good a bit baggier!

£19.99
www.hm.com

03 Ecru Scratch Print Long Sleeve Shirt

Give your wardrobe a graphic twist with this scratch print long-sleeve shirt. Featuring a button-down collar and button-through front.

£30
www.riverisland.com

04 Black Leather-look Trim Smart Jacket

Part of the River Island Limited Edition range, make a polished impression in this modern yet sophisticated black smart jacket. Featuring single button fastening, leather-look neck trim and zip-fastened pockets.

£110
www.riverisland.com

05 White Long Sleeve Grandad Collar Shirt

Great under a jacket, you'll look dapper in this white grandad collar long-sleeve shirt. A staple classic for your wardrobe.

£28
www.riverisland.com

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01



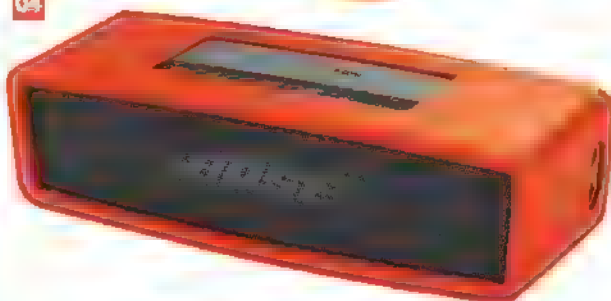
02



03



04



05



05



Music is a big part of most of our lives, so why not experience it the way it's meant to be experienced? Here are six of the hottest wireless speakers on the market, designed to blow you away...

01 Sony SRS-X5

The compact X5 wireless speaker delivers rich sound you can take anywhere. With a 20W, 2+1 channel speaker system, Bluetooth and NFC, you can easily stream and enjoy your music from a smartphone or tablet.

£149
www.sony.co.uk

02 Pure Voca

For crisp sound quality you can take with you, the Pure

Voca Portable Wireless Speaker is perfect for use both inside and outside the house. Play music wirelessly from any Bluetooth device, such as smartphones, tablets or MP3. It's a quick and easy way to listen to your own music collection or your favourite apps.

£59.99
www.currys.co.uk

03 i-box Six

Six is a British-designed take

anywhere portable speaker. It's small, at 155x58x28mm and, despite its long-life 10-hour playtime battery, weighs just 202g, making it one of the most convenient audio products on the market.

£59.99
www.boxstyle.com

04 Bose SoundLink Mini

The Bose SoundLink Mini is a small Bluetooth speaker with a charging dock that makes it ridiculously convenient to take

around the house with you. Its small-but-stubby design means it's portable too.

£150
www.johnlewis.com

05 Skullcandy Air Raid

Bring the loud wherever you go with the Skullcandy Air Raid. Delivering intense 360-degree sound, this beast of a Bluetooth speaker is the loudest in its class, guaranteeing your playlist maximum power wherever you are.

£129.99
www.amazon.co.uk

06 Bayan Soundbook Go

Soundbook GO is Bayan Audio's ultra-compact wireless speaker, designed to help you enjoy expansive sound wherever you travel. Its design and dimensions make it perfect for slipping in a bag or suitcase, meaning you can enjoy your music anywhere for up to nine hours.

£119
www.sellindges.com



01



02



03

Out with the Old

AND IN WITH THE BLUE



04



05

01 Oslo Bookcase

This urban, contemporary-style bookcase/storage unit is exclusive to Tesco has a white matt lacquer and American white oak veneer finish. Self-assembly. H180xW80xD35cm. **£169**
www.tesco.com

02 Hawaii/Metropolis Cushions

The Hawaii Bolster and Metropolis cushions feature dynamic watercolour prints. Measurements: 30cm x 50cm. 100% cotton front. Dry clean only. **£70 each**
www.amy-sia.com

03 3 Drawer Wooden Storage Bench

This sturdy unit is a great way to keep all your belongings neat and tidy. It comes with blackboard frontage, to enable you to write the contents of each drawer. It can double up as a bench seat. **£179.95**
www.Ms.odyMalson.co.uk

04 Chesterfield Sofa

Deep buttoning, which creates the quilted finish, is painstakingly hand-crafted button by button and tied through the upholstery. Traditionally a very firm sofa. **£1882**
www.delcor.co.uk

05 Hudson Table Lamp

Crystal Black, Clear complete with Shade. Black faux silk drum shade, black & clear-crystal base in line rocker. **£142.80**
www.darlighting.co.uk

WIN!

WIN! We've got three pairs of aussieBum WJ Bare to give away...

Size does matter when it comes to men's underwear technology. Now more than ever you are guaranteed to look even bigger

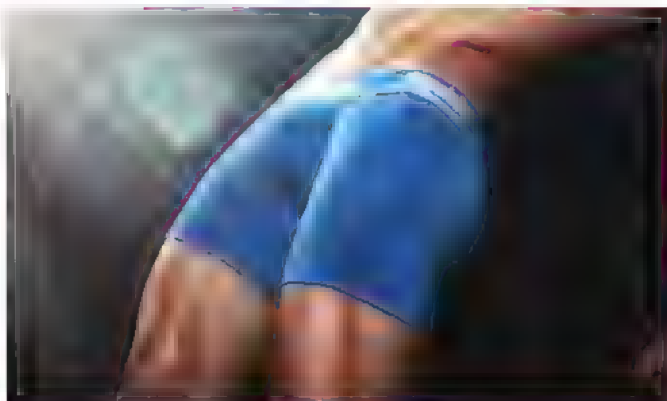
Thanks to the new patented WonderJock WJBare range WJBare has no special strings padding or artificial extras, size enhancement comes purely from the exclusive aussieBum wonderJock Technology. WJBare is made using a light weight natural Micro Modal yarn that's designed to "Flex & Stretch" for a superior fit and extra comfort. We've teamed up with aussieBum to give away three pairs of WJ Bare parts.

Simply answer this question to enter

What country makes aussieBum?

- A) France
- B) Australia
- C) Japan

Competition closes on Monday 26 January 2015. Winners will be drawn at random and notified by email.



Visit www.midlandszone.co.uk to enter!

SOMETIMES THE ONLY STRAIGHT THING

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**Specialist Civil Partnership solicitors
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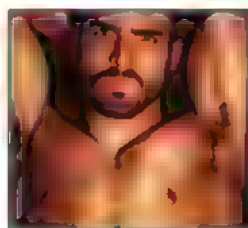
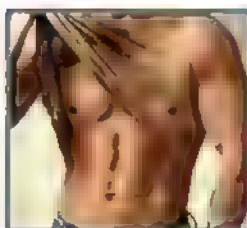
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WHAT'S ON IN YOUR LOCAL GAY VENUES

SCENE

JANUARY 2015

**CHARLI
XCX**

**BRINGS BOOM CLAP
TO BIRMINGHAM**

INSIDE...

NYE RE-RUNS GALORE

Relive New Year's Eve with a host of re-run parties across the Midlands

CAMP CABARET

The UK's biggest and best cabaret acts take to the stage in Birmingham

GET READY FOR LIP GLOSS

The popular monthly night for Birmingham's trans* community returns to Eden Bar

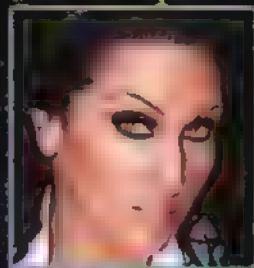
HOLY TRANNITY PRESENTS

UK
EXCLUSIVE

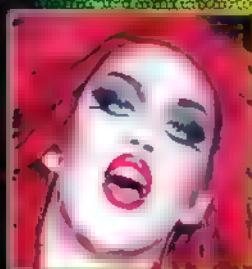
RuPaul's DRAG RACE BATTLE OF THE SEASONS

2015 CONDRAGULATIONS TOUR

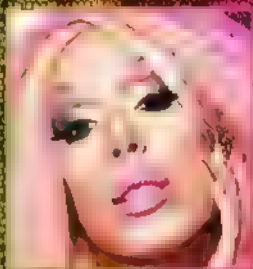
HOSTED BY



**MICHELLE
VISAGE**



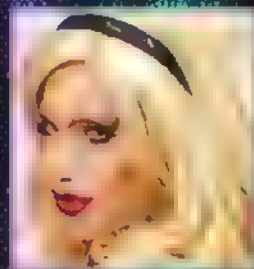
**ADORE
DELANO**



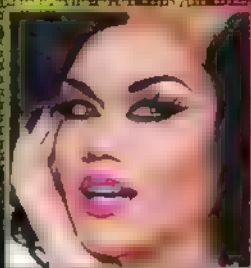
**ALASKA
5000**



**IVY
WINTERS**



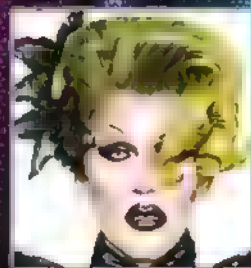
**JINKX
MONSOON**



**MANILA
LUZON**



**PANDORA
BOXX**



**SHARON
NEEDLES**

SUNDAY 12TH APRIL 2015
THE RITZ, MANCHESTER

for more information and tickets: rupaulbots.com

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LINEUP SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Live cabaret at Shrewsbury's C:21 with SANDRA

Monday nights at C:21 in Shrewsbury is one of the biggest gay nights in the West Midlands. The first Monday of every month sees the popular venue hosting live cabaret, with this month's spot being filled by the one and only Sandra - the whore of Hampstead Heath! Not only that, every Monday night throughout the month sees Marty take to the stage with fun and games!



ONE POUND DRINKS AT SIDEWALK

Birmingham's popular Sidewalk bar on Hurst Street brings you Pounded each and every Monday. From 6pm onwards, you can get your hands on drinks from £1. Spirits, beer, bottles - you name it, it's on offer!

on selected spirits. £1.50
Jagerbomb
Carling
Strongbow / Sambucca



dent host Marty (The Girl who likes to party) **Mon 5 Jan** - Live cabaret with Sandra. Free admission before midnight
C:21, SHREWSBURY

THE MONDAY CLUB 9pm-5am
Student night. Everything is £2 (Shots £1) with Du Lee Edward
GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON

CHILLAX F
[...]

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

CHILL NIGHT with
THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

GET THE PARTY STARTED Fre
[...]

GOSHIP, STOKE ON TRENT

STUDENT NIGHT Free admission
drinks £1.50 be
PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

BIRMINGHAM

2-FOR-1 COCKTAILS AT THE LOFT LOUNGE

When you've finished work for the day, instead of heading straight home, why not pop into The Loft Lounge in Birmingham for a cheeky cocktail or two? Selected cocktails are two-for-one all day and night between Sunday and Friday! Booooo!
THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday - All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
THE LOFT LOUNGE

MINISTRY OF POUND with Du Mike Emery from 9pm. Selected drinks £1. Open until 2am
MISSING BAR

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT with Mrs Mills and DJ Deano. Cash prizes and free drinks. Happy Hour 12noon-10pm
THE VILLAGE INN

POUNDED Come and get Pounded from 6pm onwards. £1

SUGAR RUSH £2 entry drinks from £2 various Dus
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

MONDAY MADNESS with D. Matt Ha
[...]
BAR JESTER

ENTRANCE & 3rd Monday n
BAR JESTER

WEST MIDLANDS

FABULOUS Fun & Games with rest

EAST MIDLANDS

2 TILL 2 Open from 2pm till 2am

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

DISCO
NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

TACKY TUESDAYS

Every Tuesday Charlotte the Harlot and Miss Penny host a great night of fun and games at The Village Inn in Birmingham. The concept is simple - two drag queens, a big wheel to spin, plenty of prizes (including free drinks!) and a lot of tack. We urge you to pop down and check it out. You certainly won't be disappointed!



90'S NIGHT - Every Tuesday night 10.30pm-3am
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

GO BACK IN TIME WITH '90S NIGHT

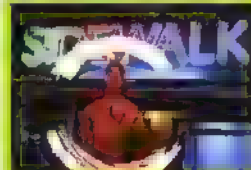
The 1990s - the decade when we were introduced to the Spice Girls and many more fantastic pop groups. Relive it by heading to The Nightingale's 90s night. You'll love it for sure!
THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
THE LOFT LOUNGE

GRAB THE MIC AT MISSING BAR

Everyone loves a bit of karaoke in their lives - so head to Missing Bar in Birmingham and join DJ James from 9pm till late. Whether you're good or bad at singing, it's great fun - so go on, grab the mic!
MISSING - BIRMINGHAM

MISSING KARAOKE With your host



TWO MEALS FOR £10

If you're looking for a meal before your night out, then look no further than Sidewalk in Birmingham. They have a cracking 'two meals for a tenner' menu - great for you and a mate!

Du James. Party starts at 9pm till late
MISSING BAR

TACKY TUESDAYS with Charlotte and Miss Penny. Songs, Games & Prizes. Happy Hour 12noon-10pm
THE VILLAGE INN

TUNE UP TUESDAY

10pm-11pm
BAR JESTER

BIG TUESDAY NIGHT PARTY

MUSIC
THE LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

CAMP QUIZ

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

DIVERSITY Weekly gay-mend with Du Jay playing
[...]
VELVET, WORCESTER

FLAUNT A twist of awesome tunes & suit every one
BREWERY BAR, WORCESTER

SAMMIE'S SINGERS Karaoke night

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

TWISTED TUESDAYS

RAINBOWS

2 TILL 2 [...]
[...]

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

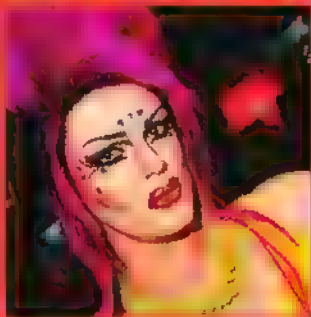
CHILL OUT NIGHT Free Entry

NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

DOVER CASTLE, LEICESTER

GRAB THE MIC with Charlotte the Harlotte at The Village Inn

If you think you've got a singing voice to rival Beyonce, Ellie Goulding or Gary Barlow, then pop along to Birmingham's Village Inn and show it off to Charlotte the Harlotte and DJ Deano. Whilst you may not walk away with a multi-million pound recording contract with Simon Cowell, you can walk away with a sense of pride - well, or embarrassment, depending on how you've done!



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Shake your tail feathers at Sidewalks new 2 for 1 cocktail menu.
SIDEWALK

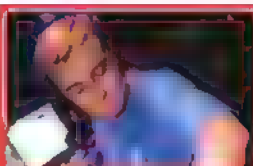
2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.
THE LOFT LOUNGE

2 GOOD 2 MISS Drinks from just £2 with DJ Mike Emery

IT'S COCKTAIL TIME AT SIDEWALK!

Rather than heading out for a pint or a double vodka and Coke, why not opt for a cocktail? Or better still, how about two? Sidewalk in Birmingham is offering two gorgeous cocktails for the price of one! If you're hungry, why not grab a bite to eat as well?

***** 100% 5.0



2 GOOD 2 MISS

Missing Bar in Birmingham certainly knows how to throw an awesome party, regardless of which day of the week it is! Pop in for a night of top fun, great tunes and cheap drinks in the company of DJ Mike Emery and the rest of the venue's team.

MISSING BAR

C FACTOR - with Charlotte the Harlotte
THE VILLAGE INN

DADDY'S DEALS AND FREE POOL

THE FOX

WACKY WEDNESDAYS Hosted

BAR JESTER

WEDNESDAY LINE Live Dance

THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

STUDENT CLUB NIGHT

THREE FURNACES, Telford

ROCKY CHARLITTE

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

EAST MIDLANDS

GAMES NIGHT

NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

Open 8pm - 11pm Free Entry

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

OUT Everyone's Out. Free entry

NGT, NOTTINGHAM

GAMES NIGHT AT THE NEW FORESTERS

If you're looking for something to do in Nottingham on a Wednesday night, then head down to The New Foresters for free pool and cheap drink!

THE NEW FORESTERS - NOTTS

Charlotte the Harlotte at Birmingham's Loft Bar

Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist La Voix heads back to Birmingham this month with not one but two fantastic shows at Eden Bar! Sadly, she didn't quite make it through to the finals of the hit ITV1 talent show - but that means we can keep her at to ourselves here in the Midlands! Catch her live on stage on Thursday 15 and Thursday 29 January.



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.
THE LOFT LOUNGE

I ♥ THE 90S with DJ Dan. Open from 6pm.
EDEN BAR

THROWBACK THURSDAY £1.20 bombs. With DJ Mykee. (Closed Christmas Day - Thu 25th Dec)
MISSING BAR

CULT Bringing dirty house back

home. Top Floor from 10pm.
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

DJ DEANO

On the decks
Happy Hour
12noon - 2am
THE VILLAGE INN



DROP THE BOMB start of your weekend. £1.50 on all bombs excluding the Gutterbomb! with our resident DJ Rowan. (Closed Xmas Day - Thurs 25 Dec)

SIDEWALK

LA VOIX Thurs 15 & Thurs 29 Jan
Live Cabaret with Britain's Got Talent star La Voix and her va va voom boys
EDEN

MISS MARTY'S MADHOUSE

Songs, Games and Happy Hour
until 2am. With Miss Marty and DJ Deano
THE VILLAGE INN



GET POUNDED

Every Thursday at The Nightingale sees the students of Birmingham's gay scene head down for the biggest party in the city. Cheap drinks and £5 entry is a great start to this incredible night out!

THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM

POUNDED £5 entry. Drinks from a £1. DJ Corey playing chart, dance and urban on Ground Floor. Miss Marty and DJ Craig with all the pop and cheese you could ask for on the middle floor.

NIGHTINGALE CLUB

MISS MARTY'S MADHOUSE

Drinks from £1

THE FOX

PARTY FISH

THE FOX

BAR JESTER

WEST MIDLANDS

MAD COW Get mooovin' and groovin'. Drinks from £1 and Element 105 on the decks.
GORGEOUS, WOLVES

CAMP KARAOKE and Cabaret

THREE FURNACES, Telford

THE NIGHTINGALE CLUB

THE LION, WALSALL

GET OUT with DJ

THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

MOSES MADNESS A night of funk

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

EAST MIDLANDS

2 TILL 2 Open

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

XXL brings all the boys back home to the yard!

Every third Friday of the month (16 January) sees Britain's biggest men-only party, XXL, head to Birmingham.

The hugely successful London event is hosted by the Core Club and brings together the men of the Midlands and beyond. Expect lots of bare bodies on a packed dance-floor and top-quality music from XXL's resident DJ, Christian M!

The guys at the Core Club have great drinks offers available all night long too!



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
THE LOFT LOUNGE

ALL DAY EVERY DAY PRICES DJ Pam, takes over the weekend by playing the best of club classics house, R&B and all your favourites Enjoy all day every day prices too!
SIDEWALK

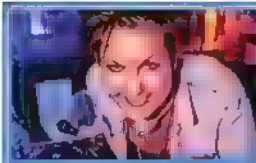
DJ JAMES HOSTS A NIGHT OF PARTY TUNES

Every Friday sees Birmingham's Missing Bar hosting a night of party anthems. Join DJ James from 9pm till late and blast out some of your favourite songs over the speakers! Don't forget there are great drinks offers too!
MISSING - BIRMINGHAM

BIG GAY FRIDAY Party anthems all night long with Missing's DJ James. Open until the early hours
MISSING BAR

DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikki
EDEN BAR

FREAKY FRIDAY with DJ Lotty Big name cabaret at midnight Open until 6am
Fri 2 Jan Trish La Camp
Fri 9 Jan The Drag With No Name
Fri 16 Jan Lola Lasagne
Fri 23 Jan Miss Thunderpussy
Fri 30 Jan Sandra
THE VILLAGE INN



INFUSION

Join DJ Corey every Friday night for Infusion. Corey will be playing the best anthems and floorfillers on the scene. Drinks are from £2 all night long - and it's a £2 entry all night long too!

INFUSION Free Entry Absolute Anthems and Floor Fillers with DJ Corey Drinks from £2 Admission £2
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

KICK START Kick start the week and from 9pm till the early hours Hosted by James
MISSING BAR

L8A With Charlotte the Harlot Open until 6am every Friday
THE VILLAGE INN



TRANS RETURN!

The first Friday of every month (2 Jan) sees Birmingham's trans* community, their friends and admirers come together for a night of fun at the city's popular Eden Bar! It's only £3 entry, so it's a great excuse to go out!

LIP GLOSS - Fri 2 Jan - Annual Lip Gloss Pageant
EDEN BAR

MIDSBEAR MEET-UP AT EDEN BAR

Friday 16 January sees the monthly Midsbears meet-up take place at Birmingham's Eden Bar. If you've not been before, it's a monthly social group for Bears and their admirers. It's a great night out too, so be sure to pop along!
EDEN - BIRMINGHAM

MIDLANDS - Fri 16 Jan - Christmas Party monthly meet up and social group for Bears and Admirers
EDEN BAR

OLD SKOOL GARAGE The first Friday of the month sees the Nightingale go back in time playing some of the best in old skool garage. A night not to be missed
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

SAATHI - Fri 30 Jan - Every last Friday monthly South Asian Gay and Lesbian club night Bollywood and Bhangra
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

SING STAR SUPERSTAR with DJ Nikki every Friday your chance to win cash!
EDEN BAR

VINTAGE FRIDAYS AT THE LOFT LOUNGE

If you're into a bit of old school music, head down to The Loft Lounge in Birmingham every Friday night for a hot helping of Motown, Northern Soul, funk, rock and all of your classic favourites.
THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM

VINTAGE FRIDAYS a night of soul, funk, rock, motown Northern Soul and all the classic favourites
THE LOFT LOUNGE

XXL - Fri 16 Jan - Men only night with DJ Christian M! Early Bear offers until 11pm Every 3rd Friday of each month
THE CORE CLUB

FUNK'D UP alternate Saturdays Spitting funky yoga house 11pm
CLUB CHIC

KARAOKE Come and have a sing at your weekend
THE FOX

RETRO FRIDAY Retro tunes with DJ Matt Happy
BAR JESTER

WEST MIDLANDS

LUSH & YOLO! 1st Fri monthly Drinks from £1 until midnight, with resident DJ's
GORGEOUS CLUB, WOLVERHAMPTON

TV PARTY NIGHT A Men's Night for Tvs. Cross Dressers and Admirers Every Friday night at
THE GREENHOUSE, DARLSTON

BANG The big weekend
HALL FIVE

YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE AT GORGEOUS

The first Friday of the month at popular Wolverhampton venue Gorgeous sees Lush and Yolo take place. You can grab £1 drinks until midnight, and there's great music from a whole host of resident DJs.
GORGEOUS - WOLVERHAMPTON

11pm
THE LION, WALSALL

CLUB NIGHT Drink promos in 9.45
THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

FREE ENTRY FRIDAYS weekend of 9pm Jan
RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

FRIDAY SOCIAL with DJ
THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

KARAOKE
THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

STREET TALK cabaret show from
PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

TFI FRIDAY A fun and funky tune of 70s high energy through current chart
BREWERY TAP, WORCESTER

EAST MIDLANDS

CLUB NIGHT

HELONKI, LEICESTER

PINK POUNDER

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

VALUE FRIDAY

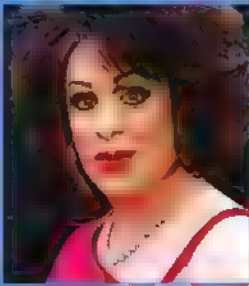
NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

THE WEEKEND STARTS HERE

NG1, NOTTINGHAM

LIFE IS A CABARET at Birmingham's Village Inn

If you're out on a Friday night and looking for some great entertainment, then look no further than Birmingham's award-winning Village Inn. January sees five great acts take to the stage. Kicking off the month's line-up is Trish La Camp on Friday the 2nd. Next up, on Friday the 9th, is the brilliant Drag With No Name. Lola Lasagne gives it her all on the 16th and then it's Miss Thunderpussy on Friday the 23rd. Wrapping things up is the brilliant Sandra, on Friday the 30th.



GORGEOUS

THANKS FOR A FANTASTIC 2014...

HERE'S SOME OF WHAT WE'VE GOT COMING NEXT YEAR...



JAKE QUICKENDEN
LIVE ON STAGE + MEET & GREET
SATURDAY 7TH FEB



STOOSHE

WOLVES PRIDE - AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY
WWW.WOLVESPRIDE.CO.UK

launches
thursday
8th january

get moovin' and groovin'



our brand new
thursday
nights

drinks from £1
element 105 on the decks

WWW.GORGEOUSCLUB.CO.UK

GORGEOUS CLUB | 34-36 SCHOOL STREET | WOLVERHAMPTON | WV1 4LF | 01902 427247



**YOUR BRAND NEW GORGEOUS
COMING SEPTEMBER 2015**

700 CAPACITY | 2 BARS | EXECUTIVE LOUNGE | VIP BOOTHS

STUNNING SOUND & LIGHTING

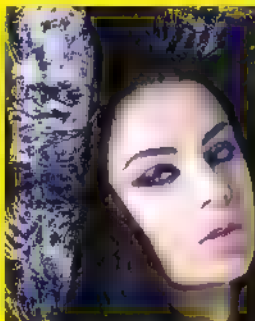
FOR MORE INFO VISIT
WWW.GORGEOUSCLUB.CO.UK

GORGEOUS CLUB | SCHOOL STREET | WOLVERHAMPTON | WV1 4LF | 01902 427247

CHARLI XCX at Birmingham New Year's Eve Re-Run

If you loved New Year's Eve, you've got the chance to enjoy it all over again! That's right, Saturday 31 January sees Birmingham gay superclub The Nightingale host its very own re-run, with a live PA from special guest Charli XCX. Charli rose to fame when her hit single Boom Ciap hit the top ten in 2014. You can also expect all the usual New Year's Eve shenanigans, including the much-loved countdown to midnight! We'll be seeing you on the dancefloor!

THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM



BIRMINGHAM

DJ DAN TAKES YOU BACK TO THE '80s

If you fancy turning back the clock thirty-odd years, then head down to Eden Bar in Birmingham, where DJ Dan takes it back to the 1980s. Expect some of the biggest tunes from the decade, not to mention cheap drinks promotions! **EDEN - BIRMINGHAM**

BOS HITS with DJ Dan from 2am to 5am back to the 80s with cheap drink promotions
EDEN BAR

THE ATTIC Available for hire. Call the venue for more info: 0121 622 4256

BIRMINGHAM

BACK TO THE 80s 2am-4am
EDEN BAR

DOUBLE DJ FUN AT THE VILLAGE INN

Every Saturday night at The Village Inn you're treated to not one but two great DJs to dance the night away with. Join DJ Lotty & DJ Richard Moon for some of the biggest party anthems and floor fillers.



THE VILLAGE INN - BIRMINGHAM

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Over 2 floors 3 DJs. Open til 8am. With DJ Lotty & DJ Richard Moon. With DJ Toni on the Village Underground
THE VILLAGE INN

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Every Saturday with loads of drinks promotions
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

NEW YEAR'S EVE RE-RUN WITH CHARLI XCX Sat 31 Jan Re-live New Year's Eve with The Nightingale's big re-run party featuring a live PA from top pop star Charli XCX
THE NIGHTINGALE

CULT Bringing dirty house back home. Top Floor from 10pm
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

KARAOKE & COCKTAILS in The Attic, plus music from across the decades
MISSING

LAB With Charlotte the Harlot. Open until 8am every Saturday
THE VILLAGE INN

MARY MAC Sat 31 Jan Live cabaret from the amazing Mary Mac
THE NIGHTINGALE

NEW YEAR'S EVE RE-RUN AT SIDEWALK

We all love New Year's Eve - and if you're offered the chance to relive it, you'd be mad not to do so! Head over to Sidewalk for their free re-run party and receive a free glass of bubbly upon arrival. Dress to impress, guys!
SIDEWALK - BIRMINGHAM

NEW YEAR'S EVE RE-RUN - Sat 31 Jan Dress your best and join the Sidewalk team for their annual New Year's Eve Re-run. Free entry all night, Champagne on arrival and big hits all night
SIDEWALK

SATURDAY SESSIONS WITH SIMON BAKER

Every Saturday night sees veteran DJ Simon Baker take to the decks at The Loft Lounge in Birmingham, ensuring your evening gets off to a great start. It's the perfect way to relax - or to get the party started!
THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM



WE <3 SATURDAYS AT MISSING BAR!

Join DJ Mykee every Saturday for a great night of music and a fantastic party atmosphere. There's an appearance from the glamorous Twiggy, too - and sexy topless dancers! It's worth popping in just for that!
MISSING BAR - BIRMINGHAM

SATURDAY NIGHT PARTY with DJ Mykee playing the best party tunes. Featuring Twiggy and sexy door boys. Open until 4am
MISSING BAR

SATURDAY SESSIONS With DJ Simon Baker from 8pm
THE LOFT LOUNGE

SATURS-FACTION Welcome in the weekend with resident DJ playing the best of everything.
SIDEWALK

SWAGGERLICIOUS Every Saturday night (Room 4)
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

IT'S SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE NIGHTINGALE
Saturday is without doubt the biggest night of the week at The Nightingale Club in Birmingham. You've got three floors of partying, split across four great rooms of music. You'd be mad not to pop in and party the night away!
THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

CLUB CHIC

CLUB CHIC

CLUB CHIC

CLUB CHIC

THE FOX

#JUST SAYING

KARAOKE Eve
THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

CAMP & SLAG 9pm-6am. Drinks from £1.50 until midnight. DJ Phil Gardner until 2.30am then Siag residents until sunrise
GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON

BIG NIGHT OUT Eve
THE LION, WALSALL

CLUB NIGHT Drink promos until 4.5. Free entry before 10pm
THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Chris
THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

INCLUSION with big name
THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

NOT TO MISS Eve
PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

EAST MIDLANDS

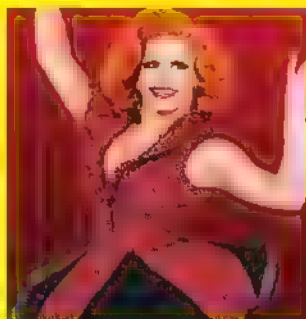
THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT - 10
THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

CLUB NIGHT With DJ N
HELSEINK, LEICESTER

MARY MAC heads to Birmingham's Eden Bar

Saturday 31 January sees a fantastic cabaret act take to the stage at the award-winning Eden Bar in Birmingham. The act in question? It's none other than Mary Mac! With a sensational voice and hilarious quips aplenty, she'll make sure you have a night out to remember! It's free entry into Eden Bar too - so be sure to stop by and have a great time!



LIVE CABARET at The Village Inn with Mrs Mills and more

If you're a big fan of cabaret, and Friday night at The Village Inn wasn't enough for you, fear not - the popular Hurst Street venue hosts cabaret on Sunday nights too! This month's stars are: Mrs Mills (Sun 4 Jan), Connie (Sun 11 Jan), Boyoncé (Sun 18 Jan) and the Divine Miss M (Sun 25 Jan). Plus, it's happy hour till 10pm, so get down there and end the week with a laugh!



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikk. Every Sunday **EDEN BAR**

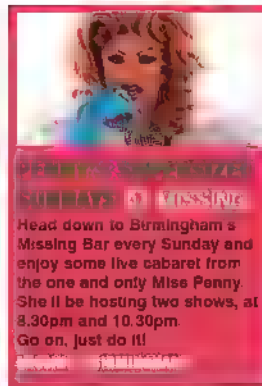
MISS PENNY'S SUPERSIZE SUNDAYS Cabaret every Sunday hosted by the one and only Miss Penny on stage at 8.30pm and 10.30pm **MISSING BAR**

SUNDAY BREAKFAST The perfect hangover cure from 9am. Just £7.95. Carvery from 12noon for just £9.95

THE LOFT LOUNGE

SUNDAY DISCO & LIVE CABARET with Mrs Mills and DJ Deano. Plus Bingo with Mrs Mills from 7pm **Sun 4 Jan** Mrs Mills **Sun 11 Jan** Connie **Sun 18 Jan** Boyoncé **Sun 25 Jan** Divine Miss M Happy Hour 12noon-10pm **THE VILLAGE INN**

SUPER SUNDAY DINNER served from 1pm. Cure that hangover and choose from a variety of meats



with all the best bits of a roast for only £6.95

CHILL OUT

THE FOX

SUNDAY'S FUNNERY

BAR JESTER

THE WEDDINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

MARTY'S PARTY 9pm-4am - Fun &

Games. Karaoke. Prizes and all round mayhem. Drinks from £2 **GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON**

CHILL OUT **RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

QUINTAS OF CHILL

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

SUNDAY ROAST

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

EAST MIDLANDS

BRUNCH CLUB

RAINBOW & DOVE, LEICESTER

KARAOKE & DISCO **NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

THE WILSON, NORTHAMPTON

SIDEWALK

BAR & RESTAURANT

New Years RE-RUN

Saturday 31st January

FREE ENTRY

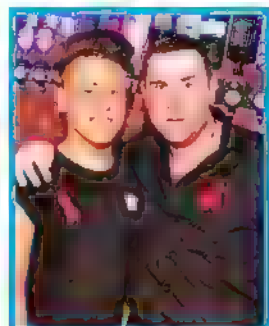
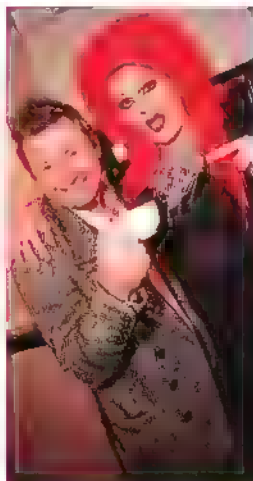
CHAMPAGNE ON ARRIVAL

BIG HITS ALL NIGHT

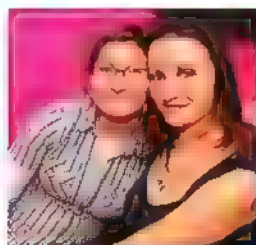
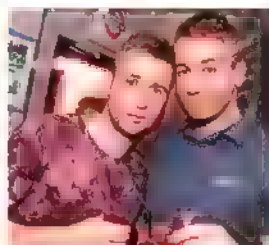
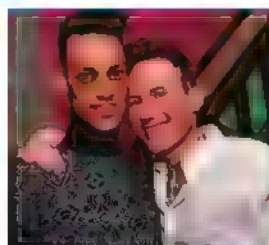
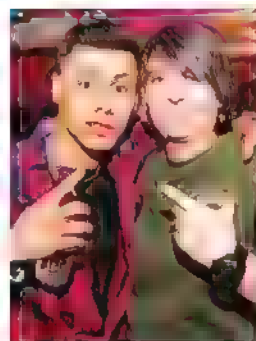
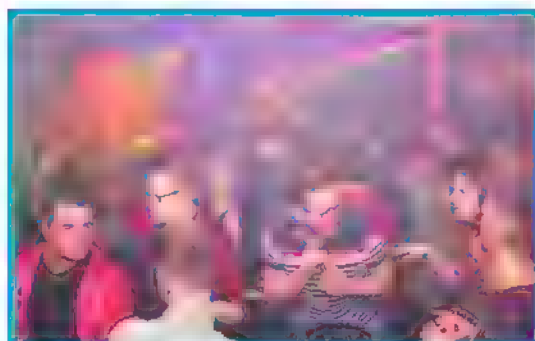
125 Hurst St, Birmingham, B5 6SE

DRESS YOUR BEST!

The Village Inn: Birmingham's party paradise!



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Pictures by **Laura Byrne**

THE VILLAGE INN

January



Fitti la camp
2ND



*Drag with
no name*
9TH



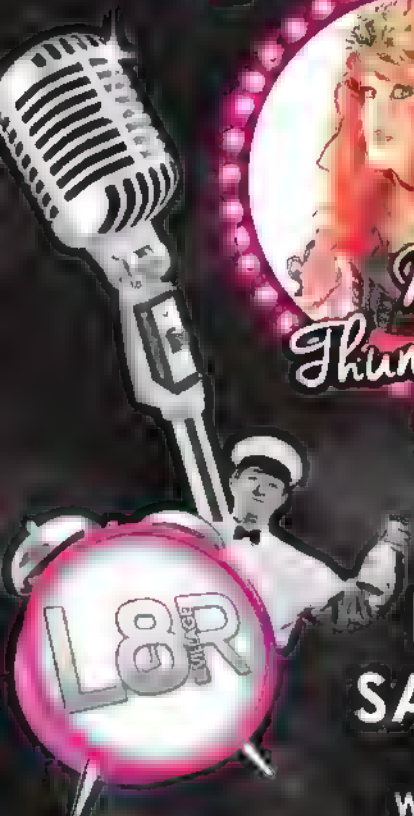
Lola Lasagne
16TH



*Miss
Thunderpussy*
23RD



Sandra
30TH



FRIDAY TILL 6AM
SATURDAY TILL 8AM

WWW.VILLAGEBIRMINGHAM.CO.UK



VILLAGEINNBIRMINGHAM



@VILLAGEBRUM



THEVILLAGEBIRMINGHAM

THE BIGGEST GAY MONDAY NIGHT IN THE MIDLANDS!

just got BIGGER!

NEW!
RESIDENT
HOST
MISS MARTY
EVERY MONDAY

PLAY ALONG
WITH MARTY...
CLICK FIRE BINGO PARTY
GAMES & GIVEAWAYS
GALORE FROM 10PM!

FREE ENTRY
BEFORE
MIDNIGHT!
10PM - 3AM

Fabulous

Join Birmingham's award-winning Marty -
The Girl That Likes to Party
EVERY MONDAY from 10pm

MONDAY 5 JAN

SANDRA

THE WHORE OF HAMPSTEAD HEATH

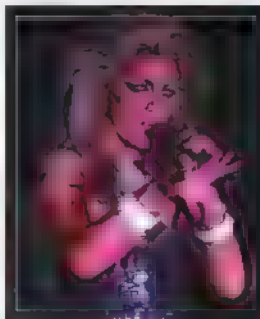
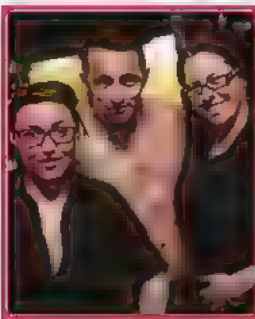
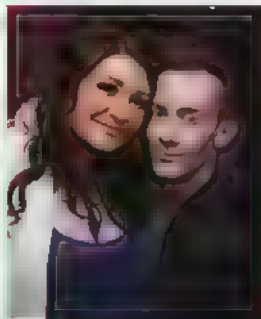
JANUARY SALE
50% OFF
Selected cocktails

MONDAY 2 FEB

**VICKY JACKSON
AS LADY GAGA**

C:21

Join Marty for a Monday party at Shrewsbury's **C:21**



More great photos on facebook



Pictures by Ryan Humphreys

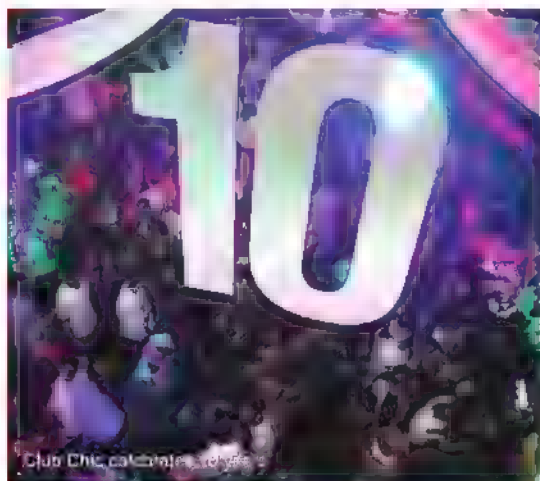
MIDLANDS
ZONE
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READ MIDLANDS ZONE ON THE GO!

MARK WRIGHT
BANGER HAS WAY INTO BIRMINGHAM FOR THE STRICTLY TOUR

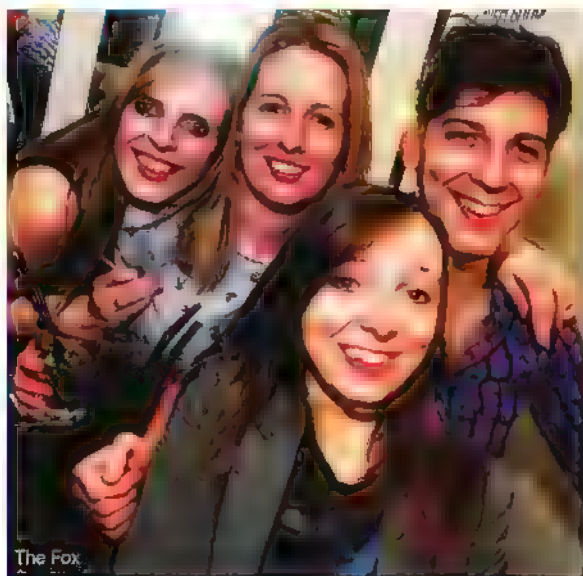
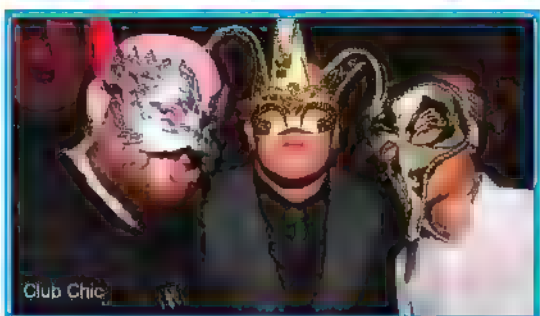
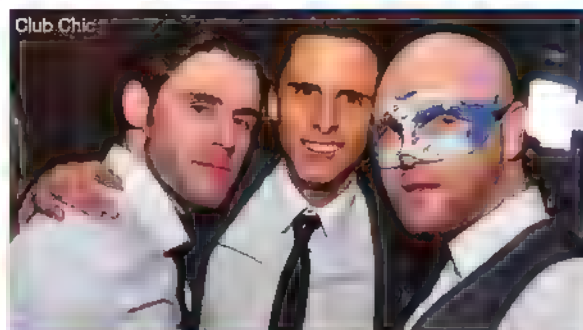
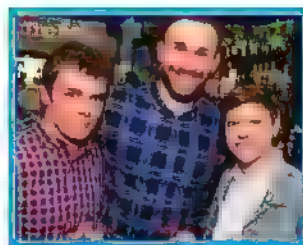
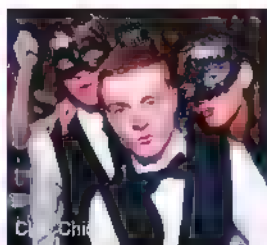
VOTE NOW!

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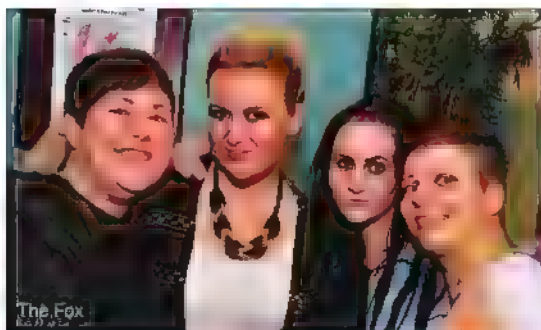
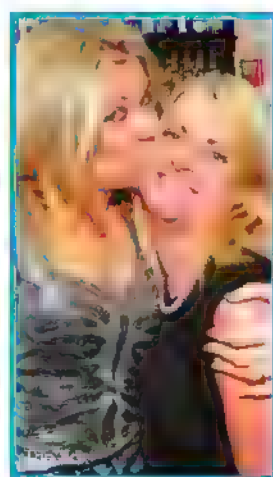
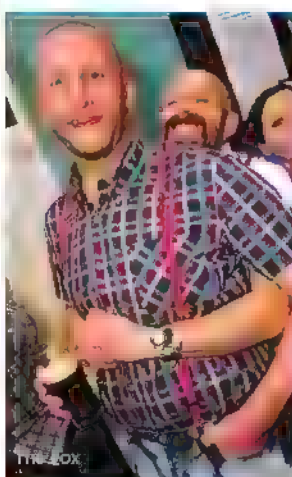
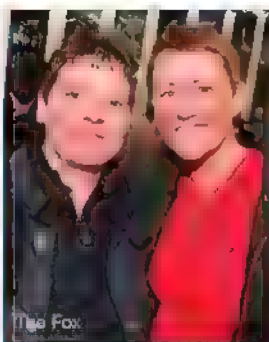
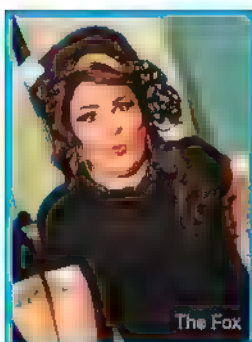
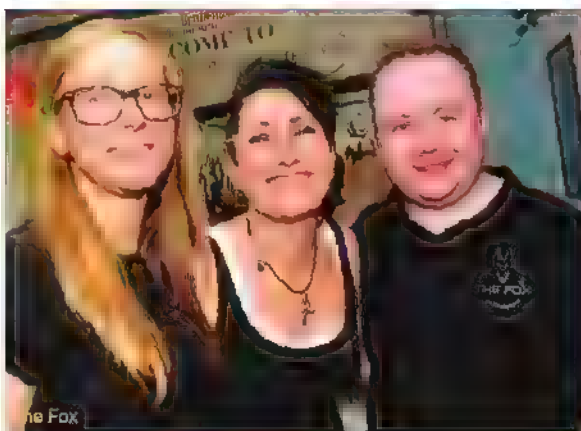
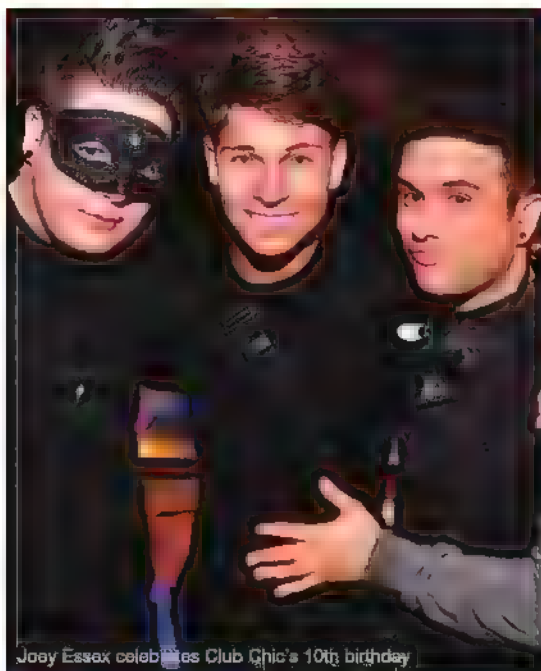
Out and about around Birmingham's Gay Village...



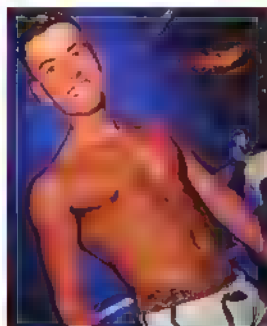
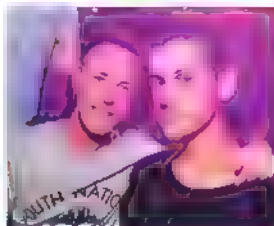
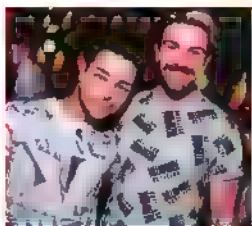
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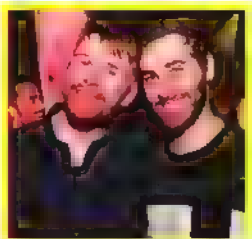
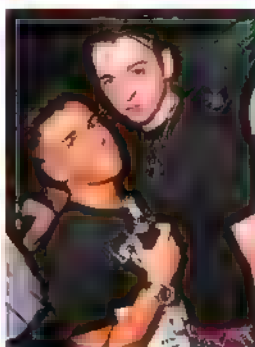
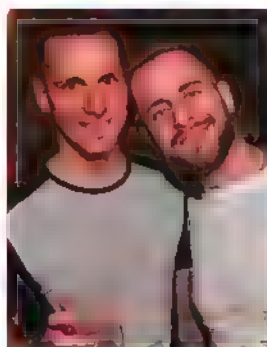
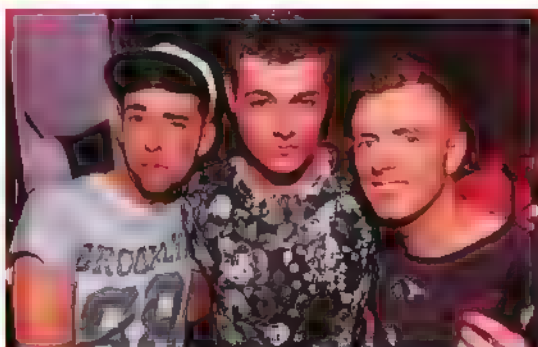
Photographs by © the byrnie



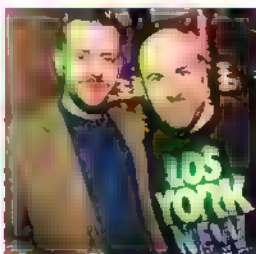
Birmingham's **Nightingale Club**: Too hot to handle!



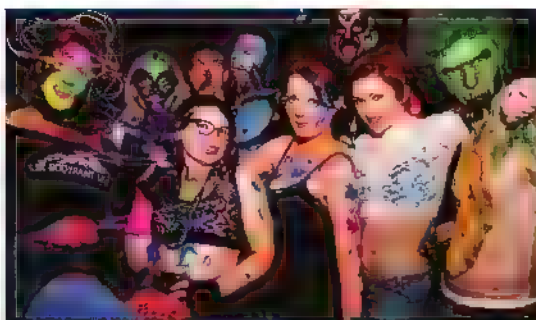
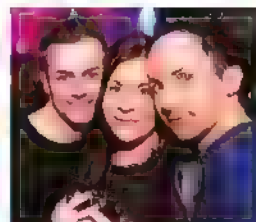
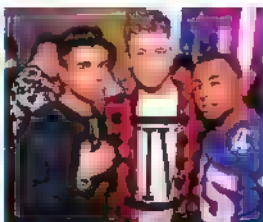
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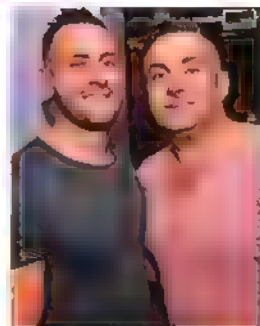
Sidewalk: A great night out in Brum's gay village!



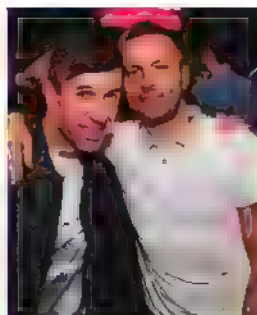
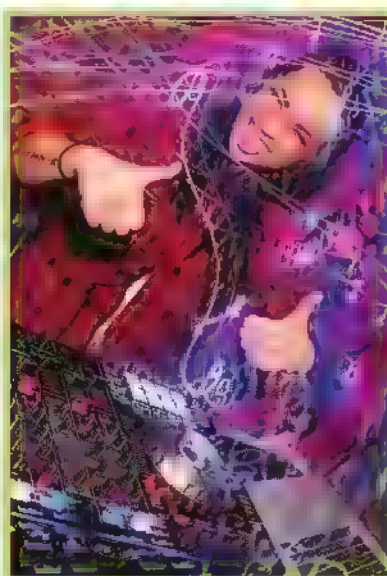
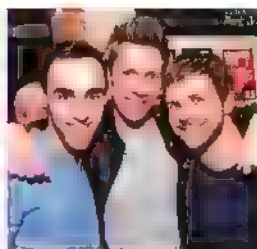
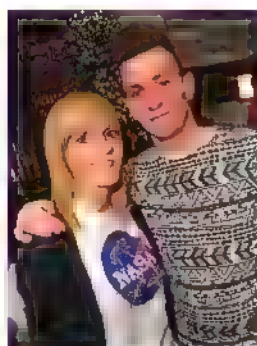
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The best bubbly in Birmingham at **The Loft Lounge**



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Pictures by **Laura Byrne**



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davina@whatsonlive.co.uk

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Our circulation is set to increase in 2015, and so we're on the look-out for local distributors in the Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Black Country area and Birmingham area. If you've got a few hours to spare each month, then could be the right person for the job!

Interested? Please email your details to:
davina@whatsonlive.co.uk

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LOFT
LOUNGE

SATURDAY
2 COCKTAILS
FOR £10*

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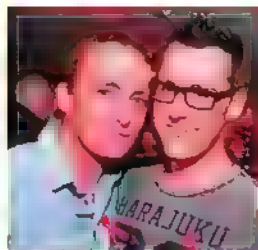
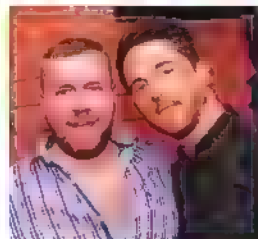
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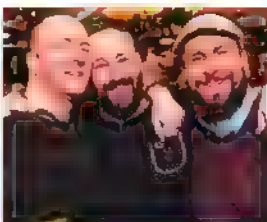
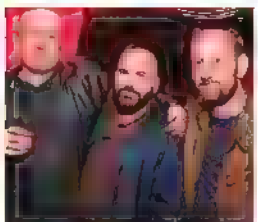
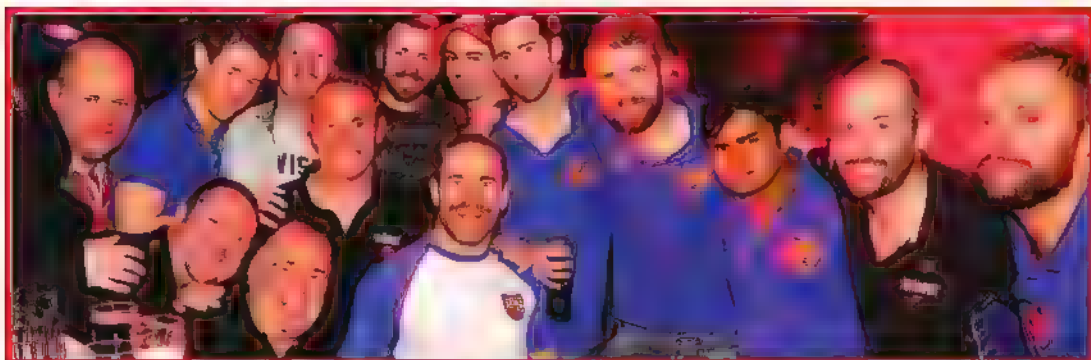
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Birmingham's best boys always head to **Eden Bar!**



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Pictures by Laura Byrne

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End of December
Wed 31ST
FREE ENTRY
**NEW YEARS EVE
PARTY!**
**WITH
DJ DAN & DJ NIKKI**

Sun 28th



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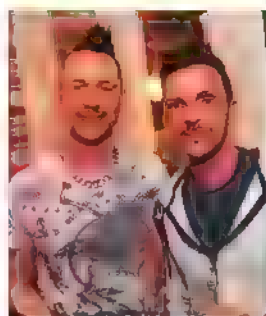
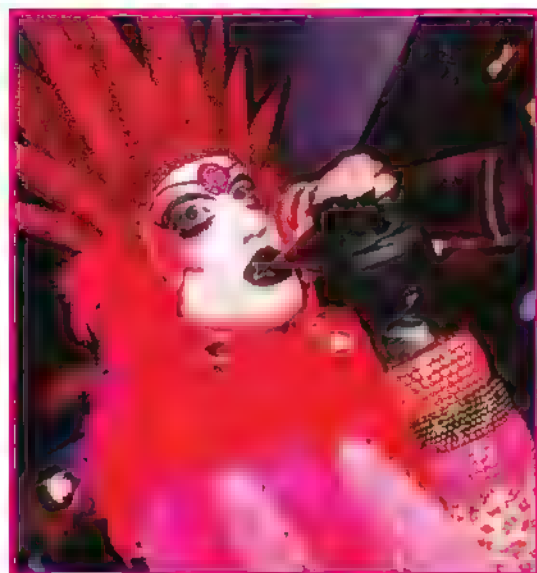
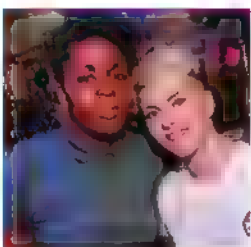
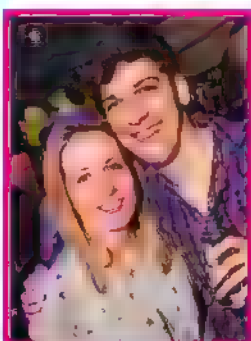
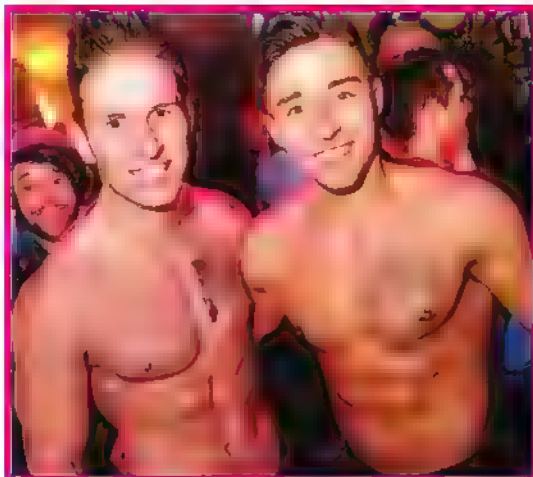
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**& Sat 31st
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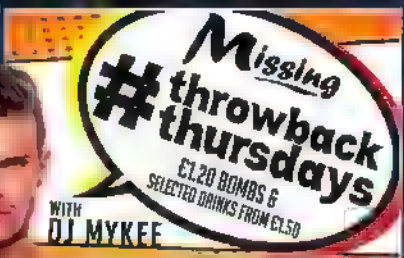
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**BIG
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**SATURDAY
NIGHT
PARTY**

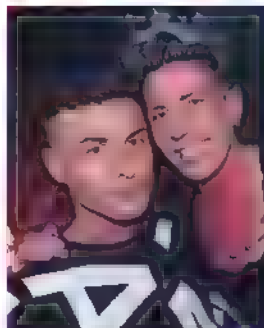
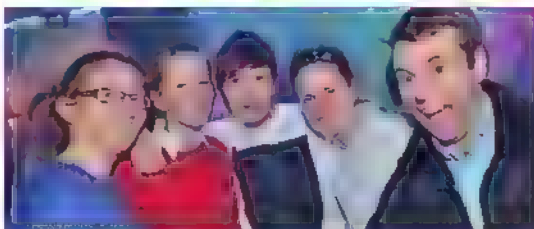
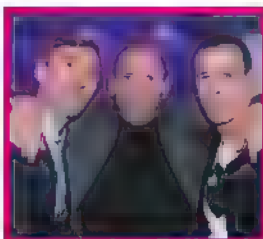
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**MISS PENNY'S
SUPERSIZE
SUNDAYS**

Missing

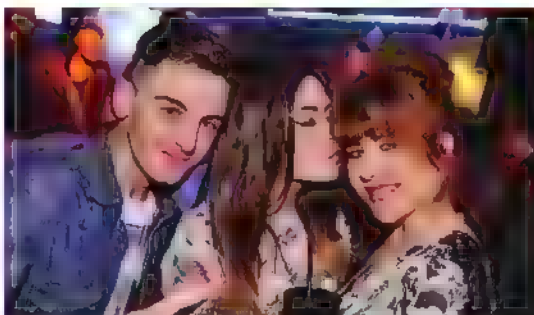
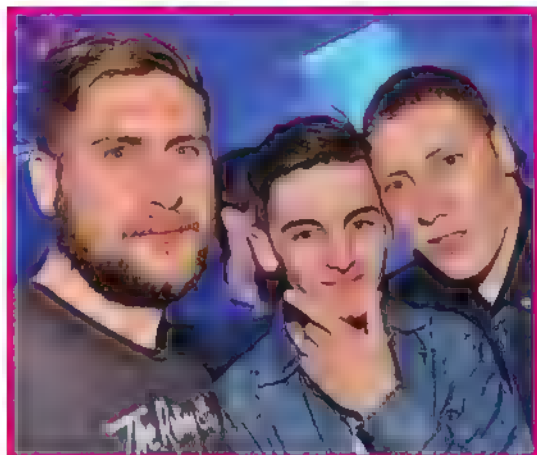
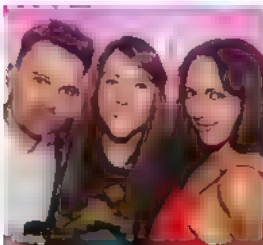
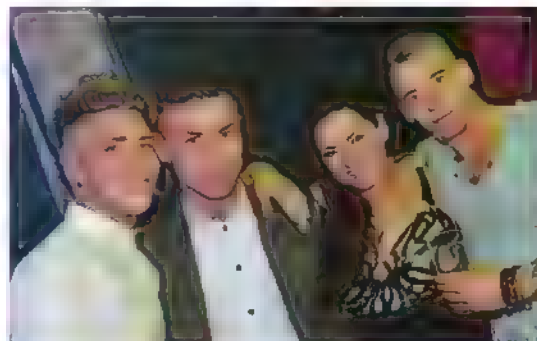
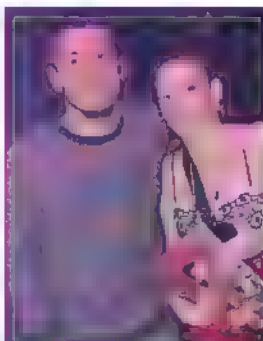
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It's looking pretty **Gorgeous** in Wolverhampton



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Pictures by **Capture Photography & Amber Rose**

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f/eden.bar
See pictures on page 46

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f/TheLoft-Lounge
See pictures on page 44

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See pictures on page 39

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See pictures on page 60

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Strictly Come Dancing Live

The glitz and glamour of BBC1's Strictly Come Dancing hits the road again this month. Hosted by Zoe Ball and featuring a new judging panel: West End star Tom Chambers, ballroom dancer Camilla Dallerup and the legendary Craig Revel Horwood, the live version sees the show's ever-popular dancers putting their celebrity partners through their paces with a host of new routines.

Performing everything from ballroom and paso doble to the waltz and the tango, the show's stars are sure to delight Strictly's loyal fans.

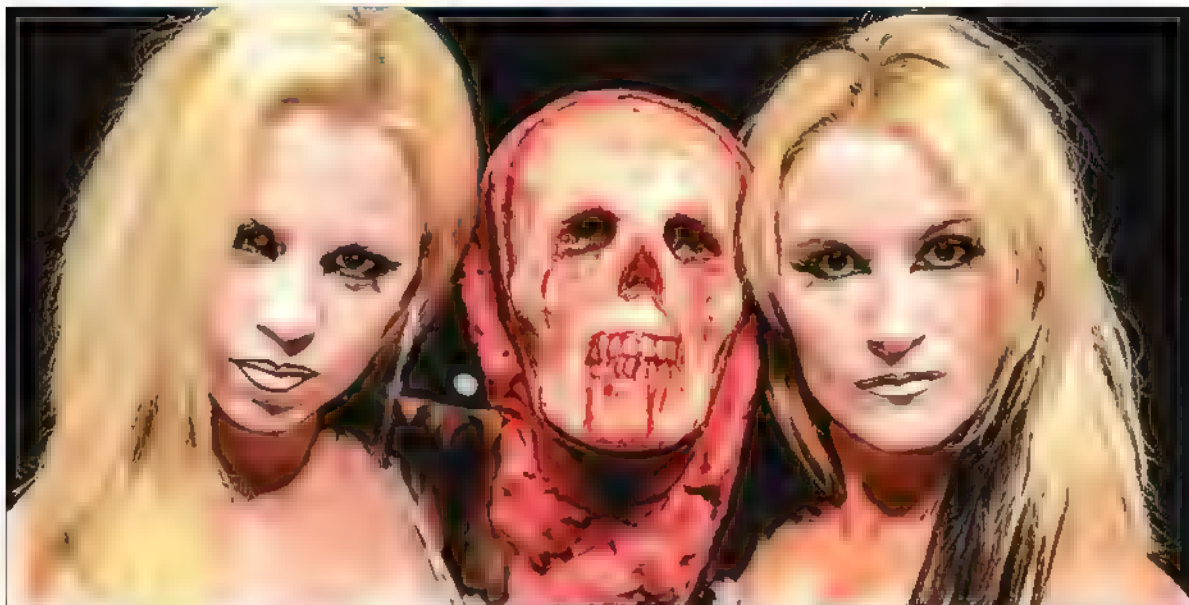
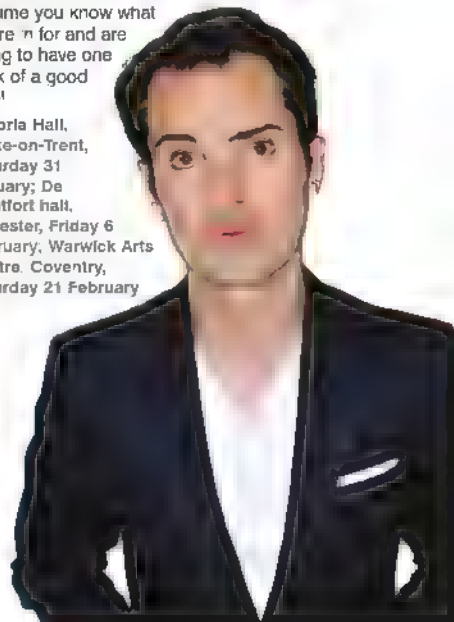
Taking to the dancefloor this year is The Saturdays' Frankie Bridge, boyband heart-throb Simon Webbe, The Only Way is Essex celebrity Mark Wright, TV presenter Caroline Flack and rugby player-come-model Thom Evans. Birmingham-born presenter Alison Hammond and Radio One DJ Scott Mills complete the line-up. Commenting on the show, Scott said: "Being on the biggest show on television has been amazing. It's been a brilliant experience to learn the routines - something I thought I would never do! Now I'll be showing off my unique new talent to fans of Strictly across the country as part of the Live Tour. It's going to be a busy few weeks but I can't wait!"

Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, Fri 16 - Sun 18 January

Jimmy Carr

There tends to be no middle ground when it comes to comedians: people either love 'em or hate 'em. This would seem to be particularly true in the case of Jimmy Carr. That said, judging by his regular presence on all manner of TV comedy programmes, it would appear there are considerably more people in the 'for' camp than there are in the 'against'. So if you've got yourself a ticket to one of these shows, it's reasonable to assume you know what you're in for and are going to have one heck of a good time!

Victoria Hall,
Stoke-on-Trent,
Saturday 31
January; De
Montfort Hall,
Leicester, Friday 6
February; Warwick Arts
Centre, Coventry,
Saturday 21 February



Circus Of Horrors: Night Of The Zombie

An off-kilter affair that bears more resemblance to a freak show than any modern definition of a circus, the one-time Britain's Got Talent finalists here present a world beyond political correctness and taste. With the performers dressed in a manner reminiscent of The Rocky Horror Show, there's no denying the skill of those participating, or indeed the ensemble's sheer 'wow' factor. This latest offering from the company is set in a corpse-ridden London in 2020, with the city caught in the cold-fingered clutches of the undead.

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 23 January; Civic Hall, Wolverhampton, Sat 24 January



Queen and Adam Lambert

Replacing the irreplaceable, Queen have filled their Freddie Mercury-sized hole with first Paul Rodgers and now Adam Lambert. By all accounts great fun was had with Rodgers, but the boys are of the opinion that Lambert's probably a more natural fit for them. "Adam is really like us," said Brian May in a recent interview. "He has so many colours, which allows us to head off on some of those strange excursions that Queen enjoy."

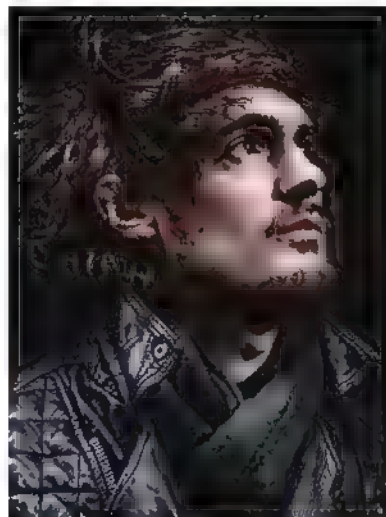
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, Fri 23 January



Jessie J

After her career breakthrough girl-power anthem Do It Like A Dude stormed the charts in 2010, Jessie J followed up with worldwide hits like Price Tag and Domino, in so doing she secured her status as one of the twenty-first century's major music stars. Her appearance as a judge on BBC One Saturday night talent show The Voice, added to her contribution to The Queen's Jubilee celebrations, offered further evidence that she's got what it takes to stay in the limelight for a long time to come. She's recently released her third studio album, *Sweet Talker*, which peaked at number five in the UK.

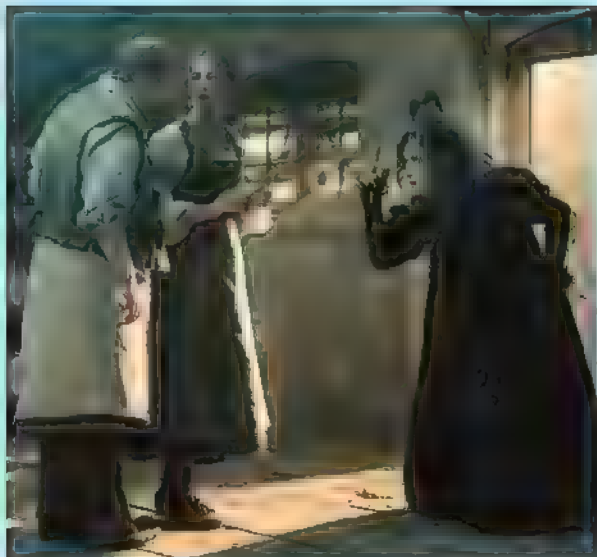
O2 Academy, Birmingham, Tues, 27 January



Blair Dunlop

Singer-songwriter and guitarist Blair is part of a musical dynasty, his father being Ashley Hutchings, the famed co-founder of Fairport Convention. Ashley joined his son on the latter's debut offering, *Bright And Blossom*, a release which was hailed as one of the most well-crafted folk albums of 2013. Second album *House Of Jacks* saw Blair evolve his music further, creating a more contemporary sound and once again scoring a hit with both critics and public alike.

Stafford Gatehouse, Mon 12 January



Into The Woods

CERT PG (125 mins)

starring Meryl Streep, Emily Blunt, James Corden, Anna Kendrick, Chris Pine, Johnny Depp, Tracey Ullman, Christine Baranski Directed by Rob Marshall (USA)

Following his accomplished adaptations of the Broadway musicals *Chicago* and *Nine*, the director Rob Marshall now grabs Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods* by the horns. A complex weave of the fairy tales *Cinderella*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Jack And The Beanstalk* and *Rapunzel*, the show dexterously shuffles our notions of these legends and comes up with something altogether more elaborate and darker. Marshall's skill is to breathe enormous humour and clarity into the interlocking narratives and to make the ingenious lyrics come alive. Employing a combination of Broadway and West End performers and bona fide movie stars, he's created a work of exuberant originality in which the magic of CGI more than augments the original stage craft. It goes without saying that Meryl Streep is astonishing as the Witch, leaving Emily Blunt as the real surprise, who, as the Baker's Wife, exhibits a stunning voice. The only caveat is that the show's original edge has been somewhat blunted by Disney's misguided aspiration for a PG certificate. Regardless, this is not a film for all the family. **Out 9 January**



Birdman **CERT 12a** (119 mins)

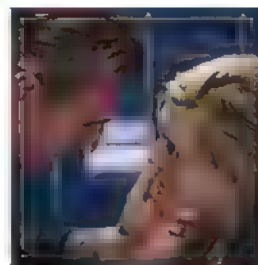
Starring Michael Keaton, Zach Galifianakis, Edward Norton, Andrea Riseborough, Amy Ryan, Emma Stone, Naomi Watts Directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu (USA)

The name to watch here is Alejandro González Iñárritu (just don't ask us to pronounce it). He is, though, one of the most highly acclaimed directors in the world, with such revered and challenging films as *Amores Perros*, *21 Grams*, *Babel* and *Beatriz at Heart*. Here, he has cast Michael Keaton as Riggan Thomson, an actor once known for playing the superhero Birdman, who is now on his uppers (Keaton himself, of course, played Batman in two blockbusters). So in an attempt to revitalise his career, Riggan has written a play that he intends to direct on Broadway, with his girlfriend (Riseborough) in the lead. Things do not go smoothly. The wise money is on Keaton winning the Oscar next month. **Out 1 January**

Taken 3 **CERT 15** (108 mins)

Starring Liam Neeson, Forest Whitaker, Famke Janssen, Maggie Grace, Doug Gray Scott, Sam Spruell Directed by Olivier Megaton (France)

They will never learn. This time Liam Neeson is framed for a murder he didn't commit and so sets out to find the real killers. There will be threats. **Out 9 January**



Wild **CERT 15** (115 mins)

Starring Reese Witherspoon, Laura Dern, Thomas Sadoski, Gaby Hoffmann Directed by Jean-Marc Vallée (USA)

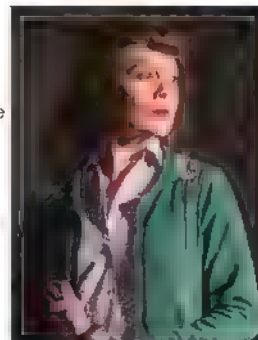
Adapted (by Nick Hornby) from her own memoir, this is the story of Cheryl Strayed who hiked 1,100 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail alone. Reese Witherspoon is said to be sensational in the part. **Out 16 January**



The Woman In Black: Angel Of Death **CERT 15** (93 mins)

Starring Helen McCrory, Jeremy Irvine, Adrian Rawlins, Oaklee Pendergast, Ned Dennehy, Phoebe Fox Directed by Tom Harper (UK)

When a group of schoolchildren are evacuated from London during the Blitz, they are moved to the remote Eel Marsh House. But what happens there is far worse than anything the Luftwaffe could mete out. The first *Woman In Black* (2011) was pretty scary, yet this one comes with the higher certificate of a 15. You have been warned. **Out 2 January**



DVDs

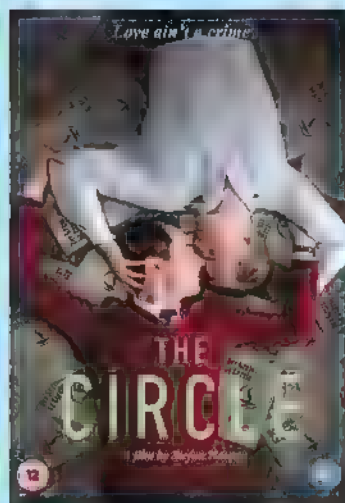
Looking: Season One (12)

This new comedy series revolves around three thirtysomething friends living in San Francisco who explore the exciting, sometimes overwhelming, options available to a new generation of gay men. Friendship may bind them, but each is at a markedly different point in his journey. Patrick is a 29-year-old video game designer returning to the dating world in the wake of his ex's engagement. Aspiring artist Agustín, 31, questions the idea of monogamy amid a move to domesticate with his boyfriend. The group's oldest member, longtime waiter Dom, 39, is facing middle age with dreams still unfulfilled. The trio's stories intertwine dramatically as they search for happiness and intimacy in an unparalleled era for gay men. A key aspect of the Looking mix is the progressive, unpredictable, sexually open culture of the Bay Area, with San Francisco serving as a backdrop for the group's lives.

Out Monday 12 January



The Circle (12)



Zürich in the mid 1950s. The shy, young teacher Ernst Osterlag becomes a member of the gay organisation Der Kreis. There he gets to know the transvestite star Röbi Rapp - and immediately falls head over heels in love with him. Röbi and Ernst live through the high point and the eventual decline of the organisation, which is seen across Europe as a symbol of gay emancipation. Ernst finds himself torn between his bourgeois existence and his commitment to homosexuality. For Röbi, meanwhile, it's about his first serious love relationship. From the present, the film looks back to the time when the 'Mother' of all European homosexual organisations had its high point then fell apart. While the repression of homosexuals became increasingly intense in Zürich, two young and very different men fight for their love and - together with their friends - for gay rights.

Out Monday 26 January

New Music



Title

Meghan Trainor

Title is the third studio album from the chart-topping Meghan Trainor, who saw her hit single, All About That Bass, hit the top spot in the UK charts last year. It promises to be a great album, full of hits for 2015.



Uptown Special

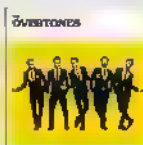
Mark Ronson

Mark Ronson is back with this, his fourth album. The talented music producer, who's worked with massive stars such as the late Amy Winehouse, will also be releasing his first track from the album - Uptown Funk, featuring Bruno Mars.

Sweet Soul Music

The Overtones

Five-piece harmony group The Overtones are back with this brand new album - and it's looking like a contender for the top spot on the album chart! If you like something soulful, grab a copy!



...and something to read

The Year Of Taking Chances

by Lucy Diamond

It's New Year's Eve. Gemma and Spencer Bailey are throwing a house party. There's music, dancing, Champagne and all their best friends under one roof. It's going to be a night to remember. Also at the party is Caitlin, who's returned to the village to pack up her much-missed mum's house and figure out what to do with her life; and Saifon, a PR executive who's keeping a secret which no amount of spin can change. The three women bond over Gemma's dodgy cocktails and fortune cookies, and vow to make the forthcoming year their best one yet.



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01



02



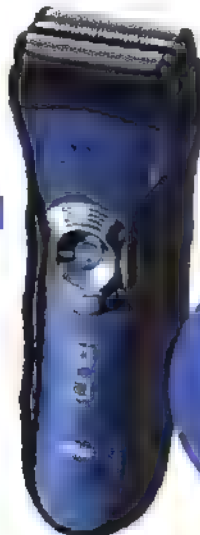
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04



05



Great for
trimming
stubble!

Ideal for
a close
shave!

A CUT ABOVE THE REST...

Guys! One of life's biggest pains is the daily need to shave - unless, of course, you grow a beard or neatly trimmed stubble. To make the process that bit easier, here's a selection of the five best electric beard trimmers and razors - and all at a reasonable price...

01 Philips AquaTouch Wet & Dry electric shaver

A comfortable, smooth shave whether used wet or dry. The TripleTrack blades cover 50% more skin surface. Great when used wet with gel or foam for enhanced comfort. Includes a built-in pop-up trimmer perfect for trimming sideburns or moustaches.

£79.99
www.boots.com

02 Remington Hyperflex Verso Rotary Shaver

Remington's Hyperflex technology provides large multiflexing heads to smoothly adjust to every angle for a close and skin-friendly shave. The Lithium-powered shaver gives up to 60 mins runtime and is an ideal styler for trimming and styling facial hair.

£99.99
www.amazon.co.uk

03 Philips Series 3000 Beard Trimmer

Extra-sharp blades deliver neat and effective cutting. Skin-friendly rounded tips prevent irritation. There's guaranteed precision with 10 lock-in-length settings between 1mm and 10mm and up to 45 minutes of cordless use after charging.

£44
www.boots.com

04 Philips Click & Style 2-in-1, Shave & Stubble

This single tool gives you any look - whether it's smooth or stubbly. Choose between two click-on/off attachments to give you either a smooth shave or perfect stubble. Switch attachments effortlessly, with SmartClick system for easy use.

£49.99
www.johnlewis.com

05 Braun Series 3 Wet and Dry Electric Shaver

New SensitiveFoil for a more efficient shave - the optimised foil cuts hairs more easily while still gliding smoothly across your skin for less irritation.

£61.99
www.boots.com

Derbyshire Friend LGBT-support organisation lands £300,000 grant

A Derbyshire organisation that supports LGBT people has landed a £299,844 grant from the Big Lottery Fund.

The Derby Telegraph reports. The money will enable Derbyshire Friend to develop its existing LGBT support through its health & wellbeing centre in Friary Street, Derby. The centre provides a safe, supportive environment where people can openly discuss issues without fear of discrimination or harassment.

Those who require support typically experience issues such as lack of confidence, hate crime and domestic abuse. This can lead to substance misuse and even suicide.

Trained volunteers act as "buddies" to help clients overcome barriers. The centre also provides activity classes, workshops and specialist mental health drop-in sessions.

Chairman of trustees Dan Merrison said, "We are delighted to learn that our Big Lottery bid has been successful, as this gives us funding for three years. Derbyshire Friend has worked with the LGBT community for more than 30 years, and this gives us the chance to continue this support and to develop further. These funds will allow us to improve the lives of LGBT people by delivering our services across the city and county. We will be focusing on improving their health and wellbeing, both physically and emotionally."

Birmingham LGBT to deliver new sexual health services for city's gay community

Birmingham LGBT is part of a winning tender to deliver a new sexual health service for the city and Solihull.

The contract has been awarded by Birmingham City Council. The new sexual health services are planned to provide an integrated sexual health 'system' for Birmingham and Solihull. University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust will be the lead provider, with Birmingham LGBT working as one of its delivery partners.

The new sexual health system, branded 'Lumbréia', will offer expanded services for men who have sex with men. It will also address the sexual health needs of the broader LGBT community including clinics for trans people and women, with better access to testing and support.

Commenting on the news, Steph

Birmingham LGBT Centre



Keeble, Director of Birmingham LGBT, said, "We're really excited to have the opportunity to partner with University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust to deliver sexual health services. This is a great opportunity to be part of an innovative and inclusive partnership providing high-quality sexual health services in Birmingham and Solihull."

The new service will begin in August 2015. Further details will be released over the coming months.

HEALTHY GAY - TEL: 0121 440 6161
WWW.HGL.NHS.UK
@hgl@hawthorn and nhs.uk

SUMMIT HOUSE
SUPPORT
LGBTQ
SERVICES
www.shsl.org.uk

GET TESTED!

- HIV Rapid Testing (results given in 1 minute)
- Chlamydia Screening
- Syphilis Rapid Testing

Our Free & Confidential services in Dudley and Sandwell include:

- Support with dealing with HIV diagnoses and medication adherence
- Sexual Health Information & Advice
- Access to Counselling and Complementary therapies
- Free access to condoms and lube
- One to one support with complex issues
- Peer Support Groups
- Support for sero-discordant relationships
- Support and advice around your rights, discrimination or hate crime
- Twice monthly non-scene Gay & Bisexual Men's group
- UNIQUE - Young Persons (16-24 yrs) LGBTQ support

Contact us today to book an appointment or for more information.

Unit 2, Holloway House, Martin Hill Street, Dudley DY2 8RT
Suite 3, 1st Floor, Lanchard House, Victoria Street, West Bromwich B70 8ER

Info@shsl.org.uk / 01384 243 220



New Year, New Home: Leicester's sexual health charity Trade is on the move!

Following the announcement a few months ago that it would be moving premises, Leicestershire sexual health charity Trade has found a new home for 2015

The new premises will be open for business from Thursday 1 January. Over the past few months, Trade has been out and about in various locations across the city and county, talking to the LGBT community and partners about the new services they would like to see the organisation provide. Ways they would like to get involved and where Trade should be located for better access.

Trade strongly believes its new home will help it continue its award-winning programmes, increase its engagement with the communities it serves and launch new projects and partnerships.

The organisation will also be taking a look at how it supports the health and wellbeing of the LGBT

communities in Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland (and maybe further afield)

Trade Sexual Health will be located at 27 Bowling Green Street, Leicester, LE1 6AS

Its website at www.tradesexualhealth.com and phone number, 0116 254 1747, will both remain the same

Trade Sexual Health is a health charity working with the LGBT community of Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland. It offers the following: a range of free and confidential support and advice services around sexual health and HIV information; one-to-one emotional and practical support; support in coming out; sexuality and relationships; rapid HIV testing; community-based men's sexual health clinics; safer sex packs for men and women; a fully qualified counselling service



For more information about Trade Sexual Health visit www.tradesexualhealth.com or call 0116 254 1747.

Trade can support you...

Trade offering free and confidential advice, information and support to the gay and bisexual communities in Leicestershire and Rutland

Trade offers all of the following:

- Sexual health & HIV information
- Safer sex advice and support
- Information regarding testing for STIs & HIV
- Free safer sex packs
- Telephone help and advice
- Drop in centre
- Counselling and one-to-one support
- Outreach on the scene
- Vaccinating opportunities

Visit our website www.tradesexualhealth.com
Call 0116 254 1747 Trade Sexual Health, 25 W. Bowling Green Street Leicester LE1 6AS

Leicester

AGE Alliance of Equality Meets every Tuesday 5.30pm at The Old 42-43-44

ACTING OUT An Acting Group for the LGBT community. Call Jayne 01902 410022

ANTHROP An LGBT group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

BARDS & BOOKS Reading Group. Every 1st Monday monthly. LGBT Centre, B'ham. 0121 625 0704

BIG30 Birmingham City Symphony Orchestra. Call Jayne 01902 410022

DUDLEY LIBRARY LGBT READING GROUP 1st Monday. Every Month. Tel: 0121 625 0704

GAPP (Gay and Performing) Group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LEICESTERSHIRE RAINBOW VOICES LGBT choir. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT READING GROUP Every 1st Monday. Call Jayne 01902 410022

JOURNEY FILM GROUP LGBT Film group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

RAINBOW SPIRIT Creative writing group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

RAINBOW VOICES LGBT choir. Call Jayne 01902 410022

SMITHWICK LIBRARY LGBT Reading group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

UNTOLD STORIES LGBT History group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WALSALL LGBT BOOK CLUB 1st Monday. Call Jayne 01902 410022

Leeds

ALLIANCE Group for the young. Call Jayne 01902 410022

ANOTHER WAY LGBT Social Group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

BROTHERHOOD Group for anyone transitioning from Female to Male. Call Jayne 01902 410022

BURIAL Group. Meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. Call Jayne 01902 410022

month at 7.30pm at the 42-43-44 Tel: 01902 410022

BRIM DING OUT Meets at 7.30pm at the 42-43-44 Tel: 01902 410022

COVENTRY LADS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

DE MONTFORT LGBT SOCIETY Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

DERBYSHIRE CC Community group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

DERBYSHIRE REACHOUT Men's Social Group. Tel: 01332 207704

DODGI Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

DUDLEY GAY & BISEXUAL MEN'S SOCIAL Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

EVERGREEN LGBT Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

FAM LGBT Social Events Group. Northants. Call Jayne 01902 410022

GAY CLASSIC CAR GROUP Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

GAYMEZ LGBT Games group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

GLOUCESTERSHIRE Gay & Lesbian group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

HEREFORD LGBT Gay Men's group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

HIGH 5 GROUP Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LEICESTER LGBT CENTRE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LAOS CAFE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LAOS CAFE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LAVENDER MOVEMENT Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LEICESTER GAY GROUP Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LEICESTER LGBT CENTRE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT PARENTS Network for LGBT parents. Call Jayne 01902 410022

SHREWSBURY What's happening in Shrewsbury. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT STAFFORDSHIRE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

NOTTINGHAM BREAKOUT Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

HUMAN RAINBOW Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

OUT EVERYWHERE Bringing LGBT people together. Call Jayne 01902 410022

PINK SOUTHWESTERS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

QUIZ NIGHT 1st Wednesday monthly 7pm @ Gorgeous. Call Jayne 01902 410022

SANDWELL Gay & Bisexual Men's Social. Call Jayne 01902 410022

SHREWSBURY Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

SOUTH ASIANS LGBT Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

THIRD WAY Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

TRUE COLOURS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WAGS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WARWICK PRIDE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WORCESTER LGBT NETWORK Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WS MIDLANDS LGBT Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WOLVERHAMPTON Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

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WOLVERHAMPTON Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

their lives. Call: 0121 446 1190

GAY BIRMINGHAM Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LEICESTER LGBT & T CENTRE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT WOLVERHAMPTON Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

MIDLANDS LGBT EMPLOYEES Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

PINK SHIELD Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

PRISM Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

RAINBOW HERITAGE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

TRADE SEXUAL HEALTH Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

EMBRACE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

GREYHOUND Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LADS LUNCH Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT 50+ Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

MATURE GAY GROUP Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

MATURE GAY MEN Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

OLDER LADS CAFE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

OLDER LBO Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

RUBY'S Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

STOKE OLDER PERSONS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WOLVERHAMPTON Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WOLVERHAMPTON Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

BIRMINGHAM L.G.C.M. Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

CHANGING ATTITUDE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

DERBY QUEST Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

JOURNEY METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LEICESTER GAY CATHOLICS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LESBIAN & GAY CHRISTIANS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

QUAKER Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

QUEST LINK Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

RAINBOW MOOT Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

STAFFORDSHIRE LESBIAN AND GAY CHRISTIANS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

BIRMINGHAM BLAZE Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

BIRMINGHAM BULLS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

BOURNVILLE LADIES HOCKEY CLUB Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LEICESTER WIDE CATS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT COMMUNITY Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT TABLE TENNIS CLUB Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT 2000 Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

GAY OUTDOOR CLUB Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

MIDLANDS OUT BADMINTON Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

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OLDER LESBIAN GROUP Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

MOSELEY SHOALS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

NOTTINGHAM BALL BOYS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

OUTDOORLADS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

STONE PANTHERS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WOLVES WALKERS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

WOLVES WARRIORS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNI LGBT Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LGBT & FRIENDS SOCIETY Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

LEGATSTON UNIVERSITY Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

STUDENT GROUPS Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

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UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM Social group. Call Jayne 01902 410022

DO YOU NEED TO GIVE YOUR LGBT COMMUNITY GROUP BETTER EXPOSURE?

Do you need to feature your group in the top 100 of the LGBT community group better exposure?

To find out more about all these organisations, visit their website

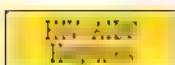
the over 40's meets every 2nd Saturday of the month at 1pm at 10 Norton Tower. Contact on: sue@hotmail.co.uk

RUBY'S Mature Women's Group, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 425092

RUBYFRUIT WOMEN Leicester based non-scene social group for lesbian, bisexual and questioning women of all ages. Wednesday nights from 7pm. Tel: 01532 156474

THE PINK LINK is a social space in Staffordshire for women with a different vision. Call: 01782 266990

WORCESTER LESBIAN GROUP Meets twice monthly e me myself, 79@outlook.com



ARIPLUS A Charity supporting people living with and affected by HIV. Call 0121 622 6471

FRESHWINDS HOUSE Holistic care and support for people living with and affected by HIV. Tel: 0121 415 5670 (8 lines)

HEALTHY GAY LIFE - BIRMINGHAM Free confidential service working with Gay, Bisexual men to promote sexual mental and social health and well-being. Tel: 0121 440 6161

LEICESTERSHIRE AIDS SUPPORT SERVICES Tel: 0116 255 9995

NOTTINGHAM DASH Confidential help and support for people living with or affected by HIV. Tel: 01782 201251

SUNNIT HOUSE SUPPORT Practical Support and confidential advice around all HIV/AIDS related issues in the Dudley Sandwell borough. Tel: 01384 234222

TERENCE HIGGINS TRUST Offer a range of services for those infected and affected by HIV and STIs Birmingham: 0121 694 6440 Solihull: 0121 694 6440 Coventry: 02476 229292 Nottingham: 0115 882 0121

Telford: 01952 221410 Wolves: 01902 711618

TRINITY STAFFORD Offers a range of confidential services advice and support for LGBT communities affected by HIV & STIs. Leicester Tel: 0116 254 1747

TRANS SOUTH STAFFS Support group for young people 13-19 who are LGBT or questioning their sexuality. Call 01782 879458

TRANS EAST YOUTH Group based in S Alton Coldfield. Tel: 07795 611781

PRISM LGBT Support group for young people in Coventry. info@prismgbtq.org

SHOUT (Sandwell) An LGBT youth steering group which works towards giving LGBT young people a voice in Sandwell. Tel: 0845 352 1276

SPACE LGBT YOUTH GROUP A group for young people aged 13 to 21. Tel: 01543 41413

SPECTRUM YOUNG LGBT SOCIAL GROUP Leicestershire Group offering opportunities for young LGBT people. Call 0116 254 7412

UNIQUE Group for young LGBT people. Meet twice monthly on Sundays. Call Matt or Justin 01384 243220

X2Y Group for young LGBT people in Wolverhampton. Every Saturday @ 10am. Tel: 01902 425092

LOST STAFFORDSHIRE Stoke on Trent & North Staffs. Tel: 01782 266998

NOTTINGHAM LESBIAN & GAY SWITCHBOARD 0115 934 5455 or 01623 621515

RAINBOW SUPPORT, HEREFORDSHIRE free and confidential support. Call: 01432 441534

TRADE SEXUAL HEALTH Offers counselling services and one to one support for LGBT communities. Leicester. Tel: 0116 254 1747

VICTIM SUPPORT Provides emotional support and practical help to anyone who has been a victim of crime. Tel: 0300 303 1977

Sexual Health

BIRMINGHAM LGBT CENTRE Support Groups, Sexual Health Testing, Cafe Community Groups. Events and more. Tel: 0121 643 0821

THE BRIDGE CENTRE Shrewsbury. A free sexual health service for gay and bisexual men. Tel: 01743 344474

BROOK BIRMINGHAM Free and confidential sexual health services in the West. Tel: 0121 245 2500

DUDLEY GAY MEN'S PROJECT Free & Confidential support service for gay, bi-sexual and MSM men living in or around Dudley. Call: Matt Barlow 07980 906895

HAWTHORNE HOUSE Sexual health testing also operates a Walk In Service every morning from 9.30am - 11.30am. Tel: 0121 424 3300 or 0121 424 2456

HEALTHY GAY LIFE Birmingham: Free confidential service working with Gay, Bisexual men to promote sexual mental and social health and well-being. Call 0121 440 6161

HEREFORD SEXUAL HEALTH CLINIC @ GAOL STREET Open Monday - Friday. Call 01432 378915 for appointments and walk in times

HIV FAST TEST Free 20 minute HIV testing in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. Call: 01952 221410

HIV TESTING by appointment at Sunniti House, West Bromwich. Call Matt Barlow on 01384 243220 or 0121 500 5205

KWAK PRICK Rapid HIV Testing. Leicester. Call 0116 254 1747

LGBT SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE Free services for the LGBT community who work or reside in South Staffs. Tel: 01543 411413

MEN ONLY Sexual Health Clinic at Heroes Health Club, Stourbridge. Call Matt 07980 906895

MEN'S HIV FAST TEST CLINIC Free 20 minute testing in Nottingham. 1st Monday monthly. Call: Adrian on 0115 883 9081

OUTWINDS A social support group for gay and bisexual men with mental health problems living in the Solihull borough. Call 0121 742 4541

SANDWELL GAY & BI MEN'S SERVICE Sexual health and social support. Call Matt Barlow 07980 906895

THE SHROPSHIRE PRICK Every 1st & last Wednesday of the month held at The Gay Men's Drop-in. Call: 0300 123 0970

TRINITY SEXUAL HEALTH Offers a range of confidential services for LGBT individuals and support for HIV & STIs including testing services. Leicester. Tel: 0116 254 1747

WALSALL GAY MEN'S HEALTH PROJECT Delivering health and social care services to the LGBT community. Tel: 01922 613141

WHITFALL STREET A sexual health clinic located in Birmingham city centre. Tel: 0121 237 5700

WORCESTERSHIRE GAY MEN'S HEALTH PROJECT providing free, confidential advice & support. Tel: 01905 681751

Support Groups

Alpha Poz Gay Men's Group. Meets 1st Thursday monthly for information and support. Call: Peter on 01905 404926

RECOVERY SMART Recovery SMART meetings in a friendly environment. s. smartgbt@yahoo.com

BIRMINGHAM PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP Meets 1st Wednesday Bi-monthly in Solihull. Tel: Maureen on 0121 742 0230

BEAM (Black ethnic & Asian Minority) Social and Support Group in Leicester. Call 0116 254 7412

EXTRIMITY & WARWICKSHIRE FRIEND gay, lesbian, bisexual or trans? Need to talk? Call 02476 714199 Mon - Fri 7.30pm - 9pm

CHANGES Based in Wolverhampton. Call Lisa on 07864240222 or Maria on 07542 450 83

DOSTI South Asian men's support group. Leicester. Call: 0116 254 1747

GROUP ONE Derby based support group for LGBT families. Call: 07779 560284

HSL COUNSELLING & PSYCHOTHERAPY Mental and sexual health for lesbians, bisexuals, gay men and trans people with a choice of male or female

counsellors. Tel: 0121 446 1085 or 07976 919481

HGL MARRIED MEN'S GROUP Support and advice for married men. Call: 0121 440 6161

HIGH 5 GROUP An HIV awareness group for gay/bisexual men who are affected by HIV. Group provides Support, events, outtings. Leicester. Tel: 0116 254 1747

HIV MEN'S GROUP Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. Call: 01952 221410

HIV WOMEN'S GROUP Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. Call: 01952 221410

INFORMAL YOUNG MEN SUPPORT A service for young men - South Asian men and African Caribbean men. Tel: 0121 440 6161. Email: info@hgl.nhs.uk

KETTERING OUT AND PROUD ASSOCIATION Organises support in the Kettering area. Call: 07877 825235

LEICESTER LGBT CENTRE Host numerous support groups. Call: 0116 254 7412

LGBT ALCOHOL SUPPORT GROUP Offer support to anybody in the gay community who has alcohol related problems. Tel: Tony on 0121 440 6161 or 07760 195642

LGBT NETWORK Stoke on Trent & North Staffordshire. Tel: 01782 266998

LGBT NETWORK Wolverhampton. Holistic support for LGBT people in the Black Country. Tel: 01902 425092

LGBT COUNSELLING Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 425092

LGBT PROFESSIONALS in Wolverhampton. Meets once a month. Tel: 01902 425092

MIND OUT Mental Health Support Group in Wolverhampton. 1st and 3rd Wednesday monthly. Tel: 01902 425092

NATURAL HEALING For emotional and physical health. Contact Alison. Lesbian Homeopath. Tel: 01902 688087

NEW ROAD PARENTS

Bromsgrove and surrounding areas. Supporting parents of LGBT people. Meets bi-monthly on the 1st Wed. Tel: Margaret 01527 832492

PINK PARENTS A social, networking group for all lesbian and gay parents and their children. E. pink parents@virginmedia.com

RANK OUTSIDERS Support group for LGBT armed forces personnel past & present. Helpline: 01740 7755

RAPE & SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROJECT BIRMINGHAM Free confidential counselling for LGBT survivors of sexual, domestic violence and hate crimes. Tel: 0121 200 1695

SANDWELL Gay & Bisexual Men's Drop-in Service Every Friday. Tel: 01384 234222

SWAIN WYRE Forest Meets the first Wednesday monthly. For more details phone Tel: 07542 070 240

TIME OUT COUNSELLING Coventry. For all LGBT+ people. Tel: 07936 525668

WORCESTER LGBT NETWORK Tel: 01905 429800

Trans Support

LEICESTER BUTTERFLIES for info visit: facebook.com/groups/butterfliesleicester;

OUTSKIRTS TRANS-GENDER The West Midlands largest transsexual support group. Email: sally@outskirtsgt.co.uk or visit: www.outskirtsgt.co.uk

SANCTUARY Providing support and practical help. Tel: 01902 744424

SANCTUARY STOKES Support people who are Transsexual, Transvestite or Transgender in North Staffs. www.transstoke.org.uk

TRANS SOUTH STAFFS Support and group for people who are Trans, Transvestite or Transgender. Tel: 01543 411413

TRANS SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP Meets every 1st and 3rd Monday monthly. Tel: 01902 425092



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BRADIN TRUBSHAW SOLICITORS

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Sometimes the only straight thing you need
in life is advice

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West Midlands
Tel: 01922 612444

Male Escort?

Do you work in the adult
entertainment industry?

If yes, HGL can provide...

- Condoms and Lubricant
- HIV and Sexual Health Information
- HIV fast-test and STI testing service
(Free certification if requested)

FREE
HIV
TESTING
& STI
TESTING

HGL
HEALTHY GAY LIFE

0121 440 6161 | www.hglhls.uk | info@hglhls.uk

Well man
clinic at the
Greenhouse
Willenhall Road, Darlaston WS10 8JG
free & confidential sexual health screening

January 16th
February 5th & 20th
March 5th & 20th
April 2nd & 17th

first Thursday of the month: 2pm - 9pm
third Friday of the month: 5pm - 8pm

clinic at
Chameleons
Free & confidential sexual health screening
2nd Monday of the month 3-6pm

clinic at the
R3troClub
Free & confidential sexual health screening
~ Ring for details ~

you do not have to be from Walsall to take advantage of this service

Walsall HIV Team 07963 124 445
momscnl n@walsall.gov.uk ~ melmore@walsall.gov.uk
Walsall Centre for Sexual Health (GUM) 01922 63 33 41

www.jdlforleather.co.uk

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Sun 28 Dec	10.00 - 00.00
Mon 29 Dec	10.00 - 00.00
Tue 30 Dec	10.00 - 00.00
New Years Eve	10.00 - 20.00
New Years Day	10.00 - 00.00
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THE GUDRUN LIMBRICK COLUMN

Watch your language!

There are some things that just aren't funny. One is Dad's Army. More seriously, the other is rape. Rape is a horrific thing. And, even worse, we handle it really badly in this country. Anecdotally, we hear of cases in which rape is handled badly by the police and the criminal justice system. And, as individuals, most of us aren't too brilliant at saying and doing the right thing when someone has experienced rape. And I make no distinction here about the gender of either the victim or the attacker. Rape is rape is rape.

Dapper Laughs (a comic character who ironically is neither dapper nor provides laughs) was rightly criticised when he made inappropriate remarks about rape recently. It looks like Mr Laughs' career is in tatters as a result. We have yet to learn whether the career of his creator, Daniel O'Reilly, will follow suit.

I am usually of the (admittedly liberal and wishy washy) opinion that we can all make mistakes and say the wrong thing at the wrong time to the wrong person (I myself am well used to the taste of my foot in my mouth) and we should forgive rather than damn forever. But I think that, because rape is such a dreadful crime, people in the public eye just cannot be seen to make light of it by making jokes about it. Not only is it in bad taste but it sends out precisely the message we need to avoid - that rape is not a serious issue. I think celebrities and politicians who make light of rape deserve all they get.

What really gets my goat, however,

is we ordinary mortals who also make light of it. And the main culprit? Anyone who uses the term 'rape'. I cannot bear the word. People laughing about someone sending out facebook updates without their permission and saying they have been 'facebook raped'. Really? We're going to give Dapper Laughs a hard time and yet equate rape with some stupid jape?

We need a huge mind-shift in this country (and others, of course, but let's start here first) about rape and sexual assault and sexual abuse of minors, so that we talk about it like grown-ups and deal with it appropriately. It's certainly not a problem that's going away, nor one that we can brush under the carpet any more. While we castigate people in the public eye who say the wrong thing, we also need to look at our own language and make sure we're not also guilty of giving out the wrong message.



Dapper Laughs

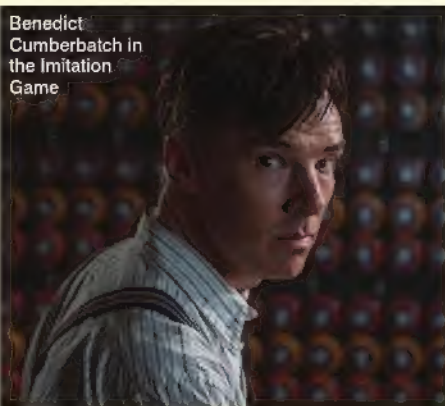


ON THE BALL with Steve Ball

Enigma

The best film I've seen in ages hit cinema screens late last year and is tipped to pick up a handful of Oscars next month. The Imitation Game, starring Benedict Cumberbatch as mathematician, cryptanalyst and war hero Alan Turing, tells the story - which was kept under wraps for years - of the breaking of the Nazi Enigma code at Bletchley Park.

Benedict Cumberbatch in the Imitation Game



It's a fascinating biopic, covering three periods in Turing's life: his school days, wartime service and final years in the 1950s. Shining through is a stellar performance by Cumberbatch as the withdrawn and socially awkward Turing.

But what Turing lacked in social skills he more than made up for in intelligence and determination. Winston Churchill said that he made the single biggest contribution in the war against Nazi Germany. His pivotal role in cracking the Enigma code is estimated to have shortened the war by at least two years and saved 14million lives. Yet Turing's life and career ended in tragedy following a robbery at his home and his eventual arrest and conviction for 'gross indecency'. He accepted chemical castration as an alternative to prison and committed suicide in 1954, 16 days before his

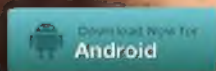
42nd birthday.

In 2009, following an Internet campaign, Prime Minister Gordon Brown made an official public apology on behalf of the British government for 'the appalling way he (Turing) was treated'. The Queen granted him a posthumous pardon in 2013.

Any right-minded person can't help but feel anger at Turing's treatment at the hands of the authorities. But the film also serves as a salutary reminder of how difficult and dangerous it was to be gay in England before homosexuality was decriminalised in 1967. All of our lives have most definitely changed for the better as a result of hard-fought campaigns for equal rights for LGBT people.

If you haven't already made a new year resolution, it's not too late. Go and see The Imitation Game.

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